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THE CÆSARS,

AND

THE AVENGER.

BY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.



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LATE TICKNOR & FIELDS, AND FIELDS, OSGOOD, & CO.

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# THE CÆSARS.



## THE CÆSARS.

THE condition of the Roman Emperors has never yet been fully appreciated ; nor has it been sufficiently perceived in what respects it was absolutely unique. There was but one Rome : no other city, as we are satisfied by the collation of many facts, either of ancient or modern times, has ever rivalled this astonishing metropolis in the grandeur of magnitude ; and not many — if we except the cities of Greece, none at all — in the grandeur of architectural display. Speaking even of London, we ought in all reason to say — the *Nation of London*, and not the City of London ; but of Rome in her palmy days, nothing less could be said in the naked severity of logic. A million and a half of souls — that population, apart from any other distinctions, is *per se* for London, a justifying ground for such a classification ; *à fortiori*, then, will it belong to a city which counted from one horn to the other of its mighty suburbs not less than four millions of inhabitants<sup>1</sup> at the very least, as we resolutely maintain after reviewing all that has been written on that much

vexed theme, and very probably half as many more. Republican Rome had her *prerogative* tribe; the earth has its *prerogative* city; and that city was Rome.

As was the city, such was its prince — mysterious, solitary, unique. Each was to the other an adequate counterpart, each reciprocally that perfect mirror which reflected as it were *in alia materia*, those incommunicable attributes of grandeur, that under the same shape and denomination never upon this earth were destined to be revived. Rome has not been repeated; neither has Cæsar. *Ubi Cæsar, ibi Roma*, was a maxim of Roman jurisprudence. And the same maxim may be translated into a wider meaning; in which it becomes true also for our historical experience. Cæsar and Rome have flourished and expired together. The illimitable attributes of the Roman prince, boundless and comprehensive as the universal air, — like that also bright and apprehensible to the most vagrant eye, yet in parts (and those not far removed) unfathomable as outer darkness, (for no chamber in a dungeon could shroud in more impenetrable concealment a deed of murder than the upper chambers of the air,) — these attributes, so impressive to the imagination, and which all the subtlety of the Roman<sup>2</sup> wit could as little fathom as the fleets of Cæsar could traverse the Polar basin, or unlock the gates of the Pacific, are best symbolized, and find their most appropriate exponent, in

the illimitable city itself — that Rome, whose centre, the Capitol, was immovable as Teneriffe or Atlas, but whose circumference was shadowy, uncertain, restless, and advancing as the frontiers of her all-conquering empire. It is false to say, that with Cæsar came the destruction of Roman greatness. Peace, hollow rhetoricians ! Until Cæsar came, Rome was a minor ; by him, she attained her majority, and fulfilled her destiny. Caius Julius, you say, deflowered the virgin purity of her civil liberties. Doubtless, then, Rome had risen immaculate from the arms of Sylla and of Marius. But, if it were Caius Julius who deflowered Rome, if under him she forfeited her dowery of civic purity, if to him she first unloosed her maiden zone, then be it affirmed boldly — that she reserved her greatest favors for the noblest of her wooers, and we may plead the justification of Falconbridge for his mother's transgressions with the lion-hearted king — such a sin was self-ennobled. Did Julius deflower Rome ? Then, by that consummation, he caused her to fulfil the functions of her nature ; he compelled her to exchange the imperfect and inchoate condition of a mere *fœmina* for the perfections of a *mulier*. And metaphor apart, we maintain that Rome lost no liberties by the mighty Julius. That which in tendency, and by the spirit of her institutions ; that which, by her very corruptions and abuses co-operating with her laws, Rome promised

and involved in the germ ; even that, and nothing less or different, did Rome unfold and accomplish under this Julian violence. The rape [if such it were] of Cæsar, her final Romulus, completed for Rome that which the rape under Romulus, her earliest Cæsar, had prosperously begun. And thus by one godlike man was a nation-city matured ; and from the everlasting and nameless<sup>3</sup> city was a man produced — capable of taming her indomitable nature, and of forcing her to immolate her wild virginity to the state best fitted for the destined ‘Mother of empires.’ Peace, then, rhetoricians, false threnodists of false liberty ! hollow chanters over the ashes of a hollow republic ! Without Cæsar, we affirm a thousand times that there would have been no perfect Rome ; and, but for Rome, there could have been no such man as Cæsar.

Both, then, were immortal ; each worthy of each, and the *Cui viget nihil simile aut secundum* of the poet, was as true of one as of the other. For, if by comparison with Rome other cities were but villages, with even more propriety it may be asserted, that after the Roman Cæsars all modern kings, kesars, or emperors, are mere phantoms of royalty. The Cæsar of Western Rome—he only of all earthly potentates, past or to come, could be said to reign as a *monarch*, that is, as a solitary king. He was not the greatest of princes, simply because there was no other but him.

self. There were doubtless a few outlying rulers, of unknown names and titles upon the margins of his empire, there were tributary lieutenants and barbarous *reguli*, the obscure vassals of his sceptre, whose homage was offered on the lowest step of his throne, and scarcely known to him but as objects of disdain. But these feudatories could no more break the unity of his empire, which embraced the whole *οικουμένη* — the total habitable world as then known to geography, or recognized by the muse of History — than at this day the British empire on the sea can be brought into question or made conditional, because some chief of Owyhee or Tongataboo should proclaim a momentary independence of the British trident, or should even offer a transient outrage to her sovereign flag. Such a *tempestas in matulâ* might raise a brief uproar in his little native archipelago, but too feeble to reach the shores of Europe by an echo — or to ascend by so much as an infantine *susurrus* to the ears of the British Neptune. Parthia, it is true, might pretend to the dignity of an empire. But her sovereigns, though sitting in the seat of the great king, (*ὁ βασιλεὺς*,) were no longer the rulers of a vast and polished nation. They were regarded as barbarians — potent only by their standing army, not upon the larger basis of civic strength; and, even under this limitation, they were supposed to owe more to the circumstances of their position — their climate, their remoteness, and their inaccessibility except through



arid and sultry deserts — than to intrinsic resources, such as could be permanently relied on in a serious trial of strength between the two powers. The kings of Parthia, therefore, were far enough from being regarded in the light of antagonistic forces to the majesty of Rome. And, these withdrawn from the comparison, who else was there — what prince, what king, what potentate of any denomination, to break the universal calm, that through centuries continued to lave, as with the quiet undulations of summer lakes, the sacred footsteps of the Cæsarean throne? The Byzantine court which, merely as the inheritor of some fragments from that august throne, was drunk with excess of pride, surrounded itself with elaborate expressions of grandeur beyond what mortal eyes were supposed able to sustain.

These fastidious, and sometimes fantastic ceremonies, originally devised as the very extremities of anti-barbarism, were often themselves but too nearly allied in spirit to the barbaresque in taste. In reality, some parts of the Byzantine court ritual were arranged in the same spirit as that of China or the Burman empire; or fashioned by anticipation, as one might think, on the practice of that Oriental Cham, who daily proclaims by sound of trumpet to the kings in the four corners of the earth — that they, having dutifully awaited the close of *his* dinner, may now with *his* royal license go to their own.

From such vestiges of *derivative* grandeur, propagated to ages so remote from itself, and sustained by manners so different from the spirit of her own, — we may faintly measure the strength of the original impulse given to the feelings of men by the *sacred* majesty of the Roman throne. How potent must that splendor have been, whose mere reflection shot rays upon a distant crown, under another heaven, and across the wilderness of fourteen centuries! Splendor, thus transmitted, thus sustained, and thus imperishable, argues a transcendent in the basis of radical power. Broad and deep must those foundations have been laid, which could support an ‘arch of empire’ rising to that giddy altitude — an altitude which sufficed to bring it within the ken of posterity to the sixtieth generation.

Power is measured by resistance. Upon such a scale, if it were applied with skill, the *relations* of greatness in Rome to the greatest of all that has gone before her, and has yet come after her, would first be adequately revealed. The youngest reader will know that the grandest forms in which the *collective* might of the human race has manifested itself, are the four monarchies. Four times have the distributive forces of nations gathered themselves, under the strong compression of the sword, into mighty aggregates — denominated *Universal Empires*, or Monarchies. These are noticed in the Holy Scriptures; and it is upon

*their* warrant that men have supposed no fifth monarchy or universal empire possible in an earthly sense; but that, whenever such an empire arises, it will have Christ for its head; in other words, that no fifth *monarchia* can take place until Christianity shall have swallowed up all other forms of religion, and shall have gathered the whole family of man into one fold under one all-conquering Shepherd. Hence<sup>4</sup> the fanatics of 1650, who proclaimed Jesus for their king, and who did sincerely anticipate his near advent in great power, and under some personal manifestation, were usually styled *Fifth-Monarchists*.

However, waiving the question (interesting enough in itself) — Whether upon earthly principles a fifth universal empire could by possibility arise in the present condition of knowledge for man individually, and of organization for man in general — this question waived, and confining ourselves to the comparison of those four monarchies which actually have existed, — of the Assyrian or earliest, we may remark, that it found men in no state of cohesion. This cause, which came in aid of its first foundation, would probably continue; and would diminish the *intensity* of the power in the same proportion as it promoted its *extension*. This monarchy would be absolute only by the personal presence of the monarch; elsewhere, from mere defect of organization, it would and must betray the total imperfections of an elementary state, and of a first

experiment. More by the weakness inherent in such a constitution, than by its own strength, did the Persian spear prevail against the Assyrian. Two centuries revolved, seven or eight generations, when Alexander found himself in the same position as Cyrus for building a third monarchy, and aided by the self-same vices of luxurious effeminacy in his enemy, confronted with the self-same virtues of enterprise and hardihood in his compatriot soldiers. The native Persians, in the earliest and very limited import of that name, were a poor and hardy race of mountaineers. So were the men of Macedon; and neither one tribe nor the other found any adequate resistance in the luxurious occupants of Babylonia. We may add with respect to these two earliest monarchies, that the Assyrian was undefined with regard to space, and the Persian fugitive with regard to time. But for the third — the Grecian or Macedonian — we know that the arts of civility, and of civil organization, had made great progress before the Roman strength was measured against it. In Macedon, in Achaia, in Syria, in Asia Minor, in Egypt, — everywhere the members of this Empire have begun to knit; the cohesion was far closer, the development of their resources more complete; the resistance therefore by many hundred degrees more formidable: consequently, by the fairest inference, the power in that proportion greater which laid the foundation of this last great monarchy. It is

probable, indeed, both *à priori*, and upon the evidence of various facts which have survived, that each of the four great empires successively triumphed over an antagonist, barbarous in comparison of itself, and each *by* and through that very superiority in the arts and policy of civilization.

Rome, therefore, which came last in the succession, and swallowed up the three great powers that had *seriatim* cast the human race into one mould, and had brought them under the unity of a single will, entered by inheritance upon all that its predecessors in that career had appropriated, but in a condition of far ampler development. Estimated merely by longitude and latitude, the territory of the Roman empire was the finest by much that has ever fallen under a single sceptre. Amongst modern empires, doubtless, the Spanish of the sixteenth century, and the British of the present, cannot but be admired as prodigious growths out of so small a stem. In that view they will be endless monuments in attestation of the marvels which are lodged in civilization. But considered in and for itself, and with no reference to the proportion of the creating forces, each of these empires has the great defect of being disjointed, and even insusceptible of perfect union. It is in fact no *vinculum* of social organization which held them together, but the ideal *vinculum* of a common fealty, and of submission to the same sceptre. This is not like the tie of man-

ners, operative even where it is not perceived, but like the distinctions of geography — existing to-day, forgotten to-morrow — and abolished by a stroke of the pen, or a trick of diplomacy. Russia, again, a mighty empire as respects the simple grandeur of magnitude, builds her power upon sterility. She has it in her power to seduce an invading foe into vast circles of starvation, of which the radii measure a thousand leagues. Frost and snow are confederates of her strength. She is strong by her very weakness. But Rome laid a belt about the Mediterranean of a thousand miles in breadth; and within that zone she comprehended not only all the great cities of the ancient world, but so perfectly did she lay the garden of the world in every climate, and for every mode of natural wealth, within her own ring-fence, that since that era no land, no part and parcel of the Roman empire, has ever risen into strength and opulence, except where unusual artificial industry has availed to counteract the tendencies of nature. So entirely had Rome engrossed whatsoever was rich by the mere bounty of native endowment.

Vast, therefore, unexampled, immeasurable, was the basis of natural power upon which the Roman throne reposed. The military force which put Rome in possession of this inordinate power, was certainly in some respects artificial; but the power itself was natural, and not subject to the ebbs and flows which attend the

commercial empires of our days, (for all are in part commercial.) The depression, the reverses, of Rome, were confined to one shape — famine; terrific shape, doubtless, but one which levies its penalty of suffering not by elaborate processes that do not exhaust their total cycle in less than long periods of years. Fortunately for those who survive, no arrears of misery are allowed by this scourge of ancient days; <sup>5</sup> the total penalty is paid down at once. As respected the hand of man, Rome slept for ages in absolute security. She could suffer only by the wrath of Providence; and, so long as she continued to be Rome, for many a generation she only of all the monarchies has feared no mortal hand,<sup>6</sup>

—— ‘ God and his Son except,  
Created thing naught valued she nor shunned.’

That the possessor and wielder of such enormous power — power alike admirable for its extent, for its intensity, and for its consecration from all counterforces which could restrain it, or endanger it — should be regarded as sharing in the attributes of supernatural beings, is no more than might naturally be expected. All other known power in human hands has either been extensive, but wanting in intensity — or intense, but wanting in extent — or, thirdly, liable to permanent control and hazard from some antagonist power commensurate with itself. But the Roman power, in its centuries of grandeur, involved every mode of

strength, with absolute immunity from all kinds and degrees of weakness. It ought not, therefore, to surprise us that the emperor, as the depositary of this charmed power, should have been looked upon as a *sacred* person, and the imperial family considered as a ‘*divina domus*.’ It is an error to regard this as excess of adulation, or as built *originally* upon hypocrisy. Undoubtedly the expressions of this feeling are sometimes gross and overcharged, as we find them in the very greatest of the Roman poets: for example, it shocks us to find a fine writer, in anticipating the future canonization of his patron, and his enstalment amongst the heavenly hosts, begging him to keep his distance warily from this or that constellation, and to be cautious of throwing his weight into either hemisphere, until the scale of proportions were accurately adjusted. These doubtless are passages degrading alike to the poet and his subject. But why? Not because they ascribe to the emperor a sanctity which he had not in the minds of men universally, or which even to the writer’s feeling was exaggerated, but because it was expressed coarsely, and as a *physical* power: now, everything physical is measurable by weight, motion, and resistance; and is therefore definite. But the very essence of whatsoever is supernatural lies in the indefinite. That power, therefore, with which the minds of men invested the emperor, was vulgarized by this coarse translation into the region of physics. Else it is evi-



dent, that any power which, by standing above all human control, occupies the next relation to superhuman modes of authority, must be invested by all minds alike with some dim and undefined relation to the sanctities of the next world. Thus, for instance, the Pope, as the father of Catholic Christendom, could not *but* be viewed with awe by any Christian of deep feeling, as standing in some relation to the true and unseen Father of the spiritual body. Nay, considering that even false religions, as those of Pagan mythology, have probably never been utterly stripped of all vestige of truth, but that every such mode of error has perhaps been designed as a process, and adapted by Providence to the case of those who were capable of admitting no more perfect shape of truth; even the heads of such superstitions (the Dalai Lama, for instance) may not unreasonably be presumed as within the cognizance and special protection of Heaven. Much more may this be supposed of him to whose care was confided the weightier part of the human race; who had it in his power to promote or to suspend the progress of human improvement; and of whom, and the motions of whose will, the very prophets of Judea took cognizance. No nation, and no king, was utterly divorced from the councils of God. Palestine, as a central chamber of God's administration, stood in some relation to all. It has been remarked, as a mysterious and significant fact, that the founders of the

great empires all had some connection, more or less, with the temple of Jerusalem. Melancthon even observes it in his Sketch of Universal History, as worthy of notice — that Pompey died, as it were, within sight of that very temple which he had polluted. Let us not suppose that Paganism, or Pagan nations, were therefore excluded from the concern and tender interest of Heaven. They also had their place allowed. And we may be sure that, amongst them, the Roman emperor, as the great accountant for the happiness of more men, and men more cultivated, than ever before were intrusted to the motions of a single will, had a special, singular, and mysterious relation to the secret counsels of Heaven.

Even we, therefore, may lawfully attribute some sanctity to the Roman emperor. That the Romans did so with absolute sincerity is certain. The altars of the emperor had a twofold consecration ; to violate them, was the double crime of treason and heresy. In his appearances of state and ceremony, the fire, the sacred fire *ἐπὶ δόμπτει*, was carried in ceremonial solemnity before him ; and every other circumstance of divine worship attended the emperor in his lifetime.<sup>7</sup>

To this view of the imperial character and relations must be added one single circumstance, which in some measure altered the whole for the individual who happened to fill the office. The emperor *de facto* might be viewed under two aspects ; there was the

man, and there was the office. In his office he was immortal and sacred : but as a question might still be raised, by means of a mercenary army, as to the claims of the particular individual who at any time filled the office, the very sanctity and privilege of the character with which he was clothed might actually be turned against himself ; and here it is, at this point, that the character of Roman emperor became truly and mysteriously awful. Gibbon has taken notice of the extraordinary situation of a subject in the Roman empire who should attempt to fly from the wrath of the crown. Such was the ubiquity of the emperor that this was absolutely hopeless. Except amongst pathless deserts or barbarous nomads, it was impossible to find even a transient sanctuary from the imperial pursuit. If he went down to the sea, there he met the emperor : if he took the wings of the morning, and fled to the uttermost parts of the earth, there also was the emperor or his lieutenants. But the same omnipresence of imperial anger and retribution which withered the hopes of the poor humble prisoner, met and confounded the emperor himself, when hurled from his giddy elevation by some fortunate rival. All the kingdoms of the earth, to one in that situation, became but so many wards of the same infinite prison. Flight, if it were even successful for the moment, did but a little retard his inevitable doom. And so evident was this, that hardly in one instance did the fallen prince *attempt*

to fly, but passively met the death which was inevitable, in the very spot where ruin had overtaken him. Neither was it possible even for a merciful conqueror to show mercy ; for, in the presence of an army so mercenary and factious, his own safety was but too deeply involved in the extermination of rival pretenders to the crown.

Such, amidst the sacred security and inviolability of the office, was the hazardous tenure of the individual. Nor did his dangers always arise from persons in the rank of competitors and rivals. Sometimes it menaced him in quarters which his eye had never penetrated, and from enemies too obscure to have reached his ear. By way of illustration we will cite a case from the life of the Emperor Commodus, which is wild enough to have furnished the plot of a romance — though as well authenticated as any other passage in that reign. The story is narrated by Herodian, and the circumstances are these : — A slave of noble qualities, and of magnificent person, having liberated himself from the degradations of bondage, determined to avenge his own wrongs by inflicting continual terror upon the town and neighborhood which had witnessed his humiliation. For this purpose he resorted to the woody recesses of the province, (somewhere in the modern Transylvania,) and, attracting to his wild encampment as many fugitives as he could, by degrees he succeeded in forming and training a very formidable troop of free-

booters. Partly from the energy of his own nature, and partly from the neglect and remissness of the provincial magistrates, the robber captain rose from less to more, until he had formed a little army, equal to the task of assaulting fortified cities. In this stage of his adventures, he encountered and defeated several of the imperial officers commanding large detachments of troops; and at length grew of consequence sufficient to draw upon himself the emperor's eye, and the honor of his personal displeasure. In high wrath and disdain at the insults offered to his eagles by this fugitive slave, Commodus fulminated against him such an edict as left him no hope of much longer escaping with impunity.

Public vengeance was now awakened; the imperial troops were marching from every quarter upon the same centre; and the slave became sensible that in a very short space of time he must be surrounded and destroyed. In this desperate situation he took a desperate resolution: he assembled his troops, laid before them his plan, concerted the various steps for carrying it into effect, and then dismissed them as independent wanderers. So ends the first chapter of the tale.

The next opens in the passes of the Alps, whither by various routes, of seven or eight hundred miles in extent, these men had threaded their way in manifold disguises through the very midst of the emperor's camps. According to this man's gigantic enterprise, in which the means were as audacious as the purpose,

the conspirators were to rendezvous, and first to recognize each other at the gates of Rome. From the Danube to the Tiber did this band of robbers severally pursue their perilous routes through all the difficulties of the road and the jealousies of the military stations, sustained by the mere thirst of vengeance — vengeance against that mighty foe whom they knew only by his proclamations against themselves. Everything continued to prosper; the conspirators met under the walls of Rome; the final details were arranged; and those also would have prospered but for a trifling accident. The season was one of general carnival at Rome; and, by the help of those disguises which the license of this festal time allowed, the murderers were to have penetrated as maskers to the emperor's retirement, when a casual word or two awoke the suspicions of a sentinel. One of the conspirators was arrested; under the terror and uncertainty of the moment he made much ampler discoveries than were expected of him; the other accomplices were secured: and Commodus was delivered from the uplifted daggers of those who had sought him by months of patient wanderings, pursued through all the depths of the Illyrian forests, and the difficulties of the Alpine passes. It is not easy to find words commensurate to the energetic hardihood of a slave — who, by way of answer and reprisal to an edict which con signed him to persecution and death, determines to cross Europe in quest of its author, though no less a

person than the master of the world — to seek him out in the inner recesses of his capital city and his private palace — and there to lodge a dagger in his heart, as the adequate reply to the imperial sentence of proscription against himself.

Such, amidst his superhuman grandeur and consecrated powers of the Roman emperor's office, were the extraordinary perils which menaced the individual, and the peculiar frailties of his condition. Nor is it possible that these circumstances of violent opposition can be better illustrated than in this tale of Herodian. Whilst the emperor's mighty arms were stretched out to arrest some potentate in the heart of Asia, a poor slave is silently and stealthily creeping round the base of the Alps, with the purpose of winning his way as a murderer to the imperial bedchamber; Cæsar is watching some mighty rebel of the Orient, at a distance of two thousand leagues, and he overlooks the dagger which is at his own heart. In short, all the heights and the depths which belong to man as aspirers, all the contrasts of glory and meanness, the extremities of what is highest and lowest in human possibility, — all met in the situation of the Roman Cæsars, and have combined to make them the most interesting studies which history has furnished.

This, as a general proposition, will be readily admitted. But meantime, it is remarkable that no field has been less trodden than the private memorials of

those very Cæsars; whilst at the same time it is equally remarkable, in concurrence with that subject for wonder, that precisely with the first of the Cæsars commences the first page of what in modern times we understand by anecdotes. Suetonius is the earliest writer in that department of biography; so far as we know, he may be held first to have devised it as a mode of history. The six writers, whose sketches are collected under the general title of the *Augustan History*, followed in the same track. Though full of entertainment, and of the most curious researches, they are all of them entirely unknown, except to a few elaborate scholars. We purpose to collect from these obscure but most interesting memorialists, a few sketches and biographical portraits of these great princes, whose public life is sometimes known, but very rarely any part of their private and personal history. We must, of course, commence with the mighty founder of the Cæsars. In his case we cannot expect so much of absolute novelty as in that of those who succeed. But if, in this first instance, we are forced to touch a little upon old things, we shall confine ourselves as much as possible to those which are susceptible of new aspects. For the whole gallery of those who follow, we can undertake that the memorials which we shall bring forward, may be looked upon as belonging pretty much to what has hitherto been a sealed book.



## CHAPTER I.

THE character of the first Cæsar has perhaps never been worse appreciated than by him who in one sense described it best—that is, with most force and eloquence wherever he really *did* comprehend it. This was Lucan, who has nowhere exhibited more brilliant rhetoric, nor wandered more from the truth, than in the contrasted portraits of Cæsar and Pompey. The famous line, ‘*Nil actum reputans si quid superesset agendum,*’ is a fine feature of the real character, finely expressed. But if it had been Lucan’s purpose (as possibly, with a view to Pompey’s benefit, in some respects it was) utterly and extravagantly to falsify the character of the great Dictator, by no single trait could he more effectually have fulfilled that purpose, nor in fewer words, than by this expressive passage, ‘*Gaudensque viam fecisse ruinâ.*’ Such a trait would be almost extravagant applied even to Marius, who (though in many respects a perfect model of Roman grandeur, massy, columnar, imperturbable, and more perhaps than any one man recorded in history capable of justifying the bold illustration of that character in Horace, ‘*Si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient*

*ruinæ*.) had, however, a ferocity in his character, and a touch of the devil in him, very rarely united with the same tranquil intrepidity. But for Cæsar, the accomplished statesman, the splendid orator, the man of elegant habits and polished taste, the patron of the fine arts in a degree transcending all examples of his own or the previous age, and as a man of general literature so much beyond his contemporaries, except Cicero, that he looked down even upon the brilliant Sylla as an illiterate person, — to class such a man with the race of furious destroyers exulting in the desolations they spread, is to err not by an individual trait, but by the whole genus. The Attilas and the Tamerlanes, who rejoice in avowing themselves the scourges of God, and the special instruments of his wrath, have no one feature of affinity to the polished and humane Cæsar, and would as little have comprehended his character, as he could have respected theirs. Even Cato, the unworthy hero of Lucan, might have suggested to him a little more truth in this instance, by a celebrated remark which he made on the characteristic distinction of Cæsar, in comparison with other revolutionary disturbers; for, whereas others had attempted the overthrow of the state in a continued paroxysm of fury, and in a state of mind resembling the lunacy of intoxication, that Cæsar, on the contrary, among that whole class of civil disturbers, was the only one who had come to the task in a temper of sobriety

and moderation, (*unum accessisse sobrium ad rempublicam delendam.*)

In reality, Lucan did not think as he wrote. He had a purpose to serve; and in an age when to act like a freeman was no longer possible, he determined at least to write in that character. It is probable, also, that he wrote with a vindictive or malicious feeling towards Nero; and, as the single means he had for gratifying *that*, resolved upon sacrificing the grandeur of Cæsar's character wherever it should be found possible. Meantime, in spite of himself, Lucan for ever betrays his lurking consciousness of the truth. Nor are there any testimonies to Cæsar's vast superiority more memorably pointed, than those which are indirectly and involuntarily extorted from this Catonic poet, by the course of his narration. Never, for example, was there within the same compass of words, a more emphatic expression of Cæsar's essential and inseparable grandeur of thought, which could not be disguised or be laid aside for an instant, than is found in the three casual words — *Indocilis privata loqui*. The very mould, it seems, by Lucan's confession, of his trivial conversation was regal; nor could he, even to serve a purpose, abjure it for so much as a casual purpose. The acts of Cæsar speak also the same language; and as these are less susceptible of a false coloring than the features of a general character, we find this poet of liberty, in the midst of one continu-

ous effort to distort the truth, and to dress up two scenical heroes, forced by the mere necessities of history into a reluctant homage to Cæsar's supremacy of moral grandeur.

Of so great a man it must be interesting to know all the well attested opinions which bear upon topics of universal interest to human nature: as indeed no others stood much chance of preservation, unless it were from as minute and curious a collector of *anecdote* as Suetonius. And, first, it would be gratifying to know the opinion of Cæsar, if he had any peculiar to himself, on the great theme of Religion. It has been held, indeed, that the constitution of his mind, and the general cast of his character, indisposed him to religious thoughts. Nay, it has been common to class him amongst deliberate atheists; and some well known anecdotes are current in books, which illustrate his contempt for the vulgar class of auguries. In this, however, he went no farther than Cicero, and other great contemporaries, who assuredly were no atheists. One mark perhaps of the wide interval which, in Cæsar's age, had begun to separate the Roman nobility from the hungry and venal populace who were daily put up to sale, and bought by the highest bidder, manifested itself in the increasing disdain for the tastes and ruling sympathies of the lowest vulgar. No mob could be more abjectly servile than was that of Rome to the superstition of portents, prodigies, and

omens. Thus far, in common with his order, and in this sense, Julius Cæsar was naturally a despiser of superstition. Mere strength of understanding would, perhaps, have made him so in any age, and apart from the circumstances of his personal history. This natural tendency in him would doubtless receive a further bias in the same direction from the office of Pontifex Maximus, which he held at an early stage of his public career. This office, by letting him too much behind the curtain, and exposing too entirely the base machinery of ropes and pulleys, which sustained the miserable jugglery played off upon the popular credulity, impressed him perhaps even unduly with contempt for those who *could* be its dupes. And we may add, that Cæsar was constitutionally, as well as by accident of position, too much a man of the world, had too powerful a leaning to the virtues of *active* life, was governed by too partial a sympathy with the whole class of *active* forces in human nature, as contradistinguished from those which tend to contemplative purposes, under any circumstances, to have become a profound believer, or a steadfast reposer of his fears and anxieties, in religious influences. A man of the world is but another designation for a man indisposed to religious awe or contemplative enthusiasm. Still it is a doctrine which we cherish—that grandeur of mind in any one department whatsoever, supposing only that it exists in excess, disposes a man

to some degree of sympathy with all other grandeur, however alien in its quality or different in its form. And upon this ground we presume the great Dictator to have had an interest in religious themes by mere compulsion of his own extraordinary elevation of mind, after making the fullest allowance for the special quality of that mind, which did certainly, to the whole extent of its characteristics, tend entirely to estrange him from such themes. We find, accordingly, that though sincerely a despiser of superstition, and with a frankness which must sometimes have been hazardous in that age, Cæsar was himself also superstitious. No man could have been otherwise who lived and conversed with that generation of people. But if superstitious, he was so after a mode of his own. In his very infirmities Cæsar manifested his greatness: his very littlenesses were noble.

‘Nec lieuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre.’

That he placed some confidence in dreams, for instance, is certain: because, had he slighted them unreservedly, he would not have dwelt upon them afterwards, or have troubled himself to recall their circumstances. Here we trace his human weakness. Yet again we are reminded that it was the weakness of Cæsar; for the dreams were noble in their imagery, and Cæzarean (so to speak) in their tone of moral feeling. Thus, for example, the night before he was assassinated, he dreamt at intervals that he was soar-

ing above the clouds on wings, and that he placed his hand within the right hand of Jove. It would seem that perhaps some obscure and half-formed image floated in his mind, of the eagle, as the king of birds; secondly, as the tutelary emblem under which his conquering legions had so often obeyed his voice; and, thirdly, as the bird of Jove. To this triple relation of the bird his dream covertly appears to point. And a singular coincidence appears between this dream and a little anecdote brought down to us, as having actually occurred in Rome about twenty-four hours before his death. A little bird, which by some is represented as a very small kind of sparrow, but which, both to the Greeks and the Romans, was known by a name implying a regal station (probably from the ambitious courage which at times prompted it to attack the eagle), was observed to direct its flight towards the senate-house, consecrated by Pompey, whilst a crowd of other birds were seen to hang upon its flight in close pursuit. What might be the object of the chase, whether the little king himself, or a sprig of laurel which he bore in his mouth, could not be determined. The whole train, pursuers and pursued, continued their flight towards Pompey's hall. Flight and pursuit were there alike arrested; the little king was overtaken by his enemies, who fell upon him as so many conspirators, and tore him limb from limb.

If this anecdote were reported to Cæsar, which is not at all improbable, considering the earnestness with which his friends labored to dissuade him from his purpose of meeting the senate on the approaching Ides of March, it is very little to be doubted that it had a considerable effect upon his feelings, and that, in fact, his own dream grew out of the impression which it had made. This way of linking the two anecdotes as cause and effect, would also bring a third anecdote under the same *nexus*. We are told that Calpurnia, the last wife of Cæsar, dreamed on the same night, and to the same ominous result. The circumstances of *her* dream are less striking, because less figurative; but on that account its import was less open to doubt: she dreamed, in fact, that after the roof of their mansion had fallen in, her husband was stabbed in her bosom. Laying all these omens together, Cæsar would have been more or less than human had he continued utterly undepressed by them. And if so much superstition as even this implies, must be taken to argue some little weakness, on the other hand let it not be forgotten, that this very weakness does but the more illustrate the unusual force of mind, and the heroic will, which obstinately laid aside these *concurring* prefigurations of impending destruction; concurring, we say, amongst themselves—and concurring also with a prophecy of older date, which was totally independent of them all.



There is another and somewhat sublime story of the same class, which belongs to the most interesting moment of Cæsar's life; and those who are disposed to explain all such tales upon physiological principles, will find an easy solution of this, in particular, in the exhaustion of body, and the intense anxiety which must have debilitated even Cæsar under the whole circumstances of the case. On the ever memorable night, when he had resolved to take the first step (and in such a case the first step, as regarded the power of retreating, was also the final step) which placed him in arms against the state, it happened that his headquarters were at some distance from the little river Rubicon, which formed the boundary of his province. With his usual caution, that no news of his motions might run before himself, on this night Cæsar gave an entertainment to his friends, in the midst of which he slipped away unobserved, and with a small retinue proceeded through the woods to the point of the river at which he designed to cross. The night<sup>s</sup> was stormy, and by the violence of the wind all the torches of his escort were blown out, so that the whole party lost their road, having probably at first intentionally deviated from the main route, and wandered about through the whole night, until the early dawn enabled them to recover their true course. The light was still gray and uncertain, as Cæsar and his retinue rode down upon the banks of the fatal river — to cross which with arms

in his hands, since the further bank lay within the territory of the Republic, *ipso facto*, proclaimed any Roman a rebel and a traitor. No man, the firmest or the most obtuse, could be otherwise than deeply agitated, when looking down upon this little brook — so insignificant in itself, but invested by law with a sanctity so awful, and so dire a consecration. The whole course of future history, and the fate of every nation, would necessarily be determined by the irretrievable act of the next half hour.

In these moments, and with this spectacle before him, and contemplating these immeasurable consequences consciously for the last time that could allow him a retreat, — impressed also by the solemnity and deep tranquillity of the silent dawn, whilst the exhaustion of his night wanderings predisposed him to nervous irritation, — Cæsar, we may be sure, was profoundly agitated. The whole elements of the scene were almost scenically disposed; the law of antagonism having perhaps never been employed with so much effect: the little quiet brook presenting a direct antithesis to its grand political character; and the innocent dawn, with its pure, untroubled repose, contrasting potently, to a man of any intellectual sensibility, with the long chaos of bloodshed, darkness and anarchy, which was to take its rise from the apparently trifling acts of this one morning. So prepared, we need not much wonder at what followed

Cæsar was yet lingering on the hither bank, when suddenly, at a point not far distant from himself, an apparition was descried in a sitting posture, and holding in its hand what seemed a flute. This phantom was of unusual size, and of beauty more than human, so far as its lineaments could be traced in the early dawn. What is singular, however, in the story, on any hypothesis which would explain it out of Cæsar's individual condition, is, that others saw it as well as he; both pastoral laborers, (who were present, probably in the character of guides,) and some of the sentinels stationed at the passage of the river. These men fancied even that a strain of music issued from this aerial flute. And some, both of the shepherds and the Roman soldiers, who were bolder than the rest, advanced towards the figure. Amongst this party, it happened that there were a few Roman trumpeters. From one of these, the phantom, rising as they advanced nearer, suddenly caught a trumpet, and blowing through it a blast of superhuman strength, plunged into the Rubicon, passed to the other bank, and disappeared in the dusky twilight of the dawn. Upon which Cæsar exclaimed: — It is finished — the die is cast — let us follow whither the guiding portents from Heaven, and the malice of our enemy, alike summon us to go.' So saying, he crossed the river with impetuosity; and, in a sudden rapture of passionate and vindictive ambition, placed himself and his retinue

upon the Italian soil ; and, as if by inspiration from Heaven, in one moment involved himself and his followers in treason, raised the standard of revolt, put his foot upon the neck of the invincible republic which had humbled all the kings of the earth, and founded an empire which was to last for a thousand and half a thousand years. In what manner this spectral appearance was managed — whether Cæsar were its author, or its dupe — will remain unknown for ever. But undoubtedly this was the first time that the advanced guard of a victorious army was headed by an apparition ; and we may conjecture that it will be the last.<sup>9</sup>

In the mingled yarn of human life, tragedy is never far asunder from farce ; and it is amusing to retrace in immediate succession to this incident of epic dignity, which has its only parallel by the way in the case of Vasco de Gama, (according to the narrative of Camoens,) when met and confronted by a sea phantom whilst attempting to double the Cape of Storms, (Cape of Good Hope,) a ludicrous passage, in which one felicitous blunder did Cæsar a better service than all the truths which Greece and Rome could have furnished. In our own experience, we once witnessed a blunder about as gross. The present Chancellor, in his first electioneering contest with the Lowthers, upon some occasion where he was recriminating upon the other party, and complaining that stratagems, which

*they* might practise with impunity, were denied to him and his, happened to point the moral of his complaint, by alleging the old adage, that one man might steal a horse with more hope of indulgence than another could look over the hedge. Whereupon, by benefit of the universal mis-hearing in the outermost ring of the audience, it became generally reported that Lord Lowther had once been engaged in an affair of horse stealing; and that he, Henry Brougham, could (had he pleased) have lodged an information against him, seeing that he was then looking over the hedge. And this charge naturally won the more credit, because it was notorious and past denying that his lordship was a capital horseman, fond of horses, and much connected with the turf. To this hour, therefore, amongst some worthy shepherds and others, it is a received article of their creed, and (as they justly observe in northern pronunciation) a *shamful* thing to be told, that Lord Lowther was once a horse stealer, and that he escaped *lagging* by reason of Harry Brougham's pity for his tender years and hopeful looks. Not less was the blunder, which, on the banks of the Rubicon, befriended Cæsar. Immediately after crossing, he harangued the troops whom he had sent forward, and others who there met him from the neighboring garrison of Ariminum. The tribunes of the people, those great officers of the democracy, corresponding by some of their functions

to our House of Commons, men personally, and by their position in the state, entirely in his interest, and who, for his sake, had fled from home, there and then he produced to the soldiery ; thus identified his cause, and that of the soldiers, with the cause of the people of Rome and of Roman liberty ; and perhaps with needless rhetoric attempted to conciliate those who were by a thousand ties and by claims innumerable, his own already ; for never yet has it been found, that with the soldier, who, from youth upwards, passes his life in camps, could the duties or the interests of citizens survive those stronger and more personal relations connecting him with his military superior. In the course of this harangue, Cæsar often raised his left hand with Demosthenic action, and once or twice he drew off the ring, which every Roman gentleman — simply *as* such — wore as the inseparable adjunct and symbol of his rank. By this action he wished to give emphasis to the accompanying words, in which he protested, that, sooner than fail in satisfying and doing justice to any the least of those who heard him and followed his fortunes, he would be content to part with his own birthright, and to forego his dearest claims. This was what he really said ; but the outermost circles of his auditors, who rather saw his gestures than distinctly heard his words, carried off the notion, (which they were careful everywhere to disperse

amongst the legions afterwards associated with them in the same camps,) that Cæsar had vowed never to lay down his arms until he had obtained for every man, the very meanest of those who heard him, the rank, privileges and appointments of a Roman knight. Here was a piece of sovereign good luck. Had he really made such a promise, Cæsar might have found that he had laid himself under very embarrassing obligations; but, as the case stood, he had, through all his following campaigns, the total benefit of such a promise, and yet could always absolve himself from the penalties of responsibility which it imposed, by appealing to the evidence of those who happened to stand in the first ranks of his audience. The blunder was gross and palpable; and yet, with the unreflecting and dull-witted soldier, it did him service greater than all the subtilties of all the schools could have accomplished, and a service which subsisted to the end of the war.

Great as Cæsar was by the benefit of his original nature, there can be no doubt that he, like others, owed something to circumstances; and, perhaps, amongst those which were most favorable to the premature development of great self-dependence, we must reckon the early death of his father. It is, or it is not, according to the nature of men, an advantage to be orphaned at an early age. Perhaps utter orphanage is rarely or never such: but to lose a father

betimes profits a strong mind greatly. To Cæsar it was a prodigious benefit that he lost his father when not much more than fifteen. Perhaps it was an advantage also to his father that he died thus early. Had he stayed a year longer, he would have seen himself despised, baffled, and made ridiculous. For where, let us ask, in any age, was the father capable of adequately sustaining that relation to the unique Caius Julius — to him, in the appropriate language of Shakspeare,

‘The foremost man of all this world?’

And, in this fine and Cæsarean line, ‘this world’ is to be understood not of the order of co-existences merely, but also of the order of successions; he was the foremost man not only of his contemporaries, but also of men generally — of all that ever should come after him, or should sit on thrones under the denominations of Czars, Kesars, or Cæsars of the Bosphorus and the Danube; of all in every age that should inherit his supremacy of mind, or should subject to themselves the generations of ordinary men by qualities analogous to his. Of this infinite superiority some part must be ascribed to his early emancipation from paternal control. There are very many cases in which, simply from considerations of sex, a female cannot stand forward as the head of a family, or as its suitable representative. If there are even ladies paramount, and in situations of command, they are also



women. The staff of authority does not annihilate their sex ; and scruples of female delicacy interfere for ever to unnerve and emasculate in their hands the sceptre however otherwise potent. Hence we see, in noble families, the merest boys put forward to represent the family dignity, as fitter supporters of that burden than their mature mothers. And of Cæsar's mother, though little is recorded, and that little incidentally, this much, at least, we learn — that, if she looked down upon him with maternal pride and delight, she looked up to him with female ambition as the re-edifier of her husband's honors, with reverence as to a column of the Roman grandeur, and with fear and feminine anxieties as to one whose aspiring spirit carried him but too prematurely into the fields of adventurous honor. One slight and evanescent sketch of the relations which subsisted between Cæsar and his mother, caught from the wrecks of time, is preserved both by Plutarch and Suetonius. We see in the early dawn the young patrician standing upon the steps of his paternal portico, his mother with her arms wreathed about his neck, looking up to his noble countenance, sometimes drawing auguries of hope from features so fitted for command, sometimes boding an early blight to promises so prematurely magnificent. That she had something of her son's aspiring character, or that he presumed so much in a mother of his, we learn from the few words which survive of

their conversation. He addressed to her no language that could tranquillize her fears. On the contrary, to any but a Roman mother his valedictory words, taken in connection with the known determination of his character, were of a nature to consummate her depression, as they tended to confirm the very worst of her fears. He was then going to stand his chance in a popular election for an office of dignity, and to launch himself upon the storms of the Campus Martius. At that period, besides other and more ordinary dangers, the bands of gladiators, kept in the pay of the more ambitious amongst the Roman nobles, gave a popular tone of ferocity and of personal risk to the course of such contests; and either to forestall the victory of an antagonist, or to avenge their own defeat, it was not at all impossible that a body of incensed competitors might intercept his final triumph by assassination. For this danger, however, he had no leisure in his thoughts of consolation; the sole danger which *he* contemplated, or supposed his mother to contemplate, was the danger of defeat, and for that he reserved his consolations. He bade her fear nothing; for that without doubt he would return with victory, and with the ensigns of the dignity he sought, or would return a corpse.

Early, indeed, did Cæsar's trials commence; and it is probable, that, had not the death of his father, by throwing him prematurely upon his own resources,

prematurely developed the masculine features of his character, forcing him whilst yet a boy under the discipline of civil conflict and the yoke of practical life, even *his* energies would have been insufficient to sustain them. His age is not exactly ascertained, but it is past a doubt that he had not reached his twentieth year when he had the hardihood to engage in a struggle with Sylla, then Dictator, and exercising the immoderate powers of that office with the license and the severity which history has made so memorable. He had neither any distinct grounds of hope, nor any eminent example at that time, to countenance him in this struggle — which yet he pushed on in the most uncompromising style, and to the utmost verge of defiance. The subject of the contrast gives it a further interest. It was the youthful wife of the youthful Cæsar who stood under the shadow of the great Dictator's displeasure; not personally, but politically, on account of her connections; and her it was, Cornelia, the daughter of a man who had been four times consul, that Cæsar was required to divorce; but he spurned the haughty mandate, and carried his determination to a triumphant issue, notwithstanding his life was at stake, and at one time saved only by shifting his place of concealment every night; and this young lady it was who afterwards became the mother of his only daughter. Both mother and daughter, it is remarkable, perished prematurely, and

at critical periods of Cæsar's life ; for it is probable enough that these irreparable wounds to Cæsar's domestic affections threw him with more exclusiveness of devotion upon the fascinations of glory and ambition than might have happened under a happier condition of his private life. That Cæsar should have escaped destruction in this unequal contest with an enemy then wielding the whole thunders of the state, is somewhat surprising ; and historians have sought their solution of the mystery in the powerful intercessions of the vestal virgins, and several others of high rank amongst the connections of his great house. These may have done something ; but it is due to Sylla, who had a sympathy with everything truly noble, to suppose him struck with powerful admiration for the audacity of the young patrician, standing out in such severe solitude among so many examples of timid concession ; and that to this magnanimous feeling in the Dictator, much of his indulgence was due. In fact, according to some accounts, it was not Sylla, but the creatures of Sylla (*adjutores*), who pursued Cæsar. We know, at all events, that Sylla formed a right estimate of Cæsar's character, and that, from the complexion of his conduct in this one instance, he drew his famous prophecy of his future destiny ; bidding his friends beware of that slipshod boy, 'for that in him lay couchant many a Marius.' A grander testimony to the awe which Cæsar inspired, or from one who knew

better the qualities of that man by whom he measured him, cannot be imagined.

It is not our intention, or consistent with our plan, to pursue this great man through the whole circumstances of his romantic career; though it is certain that many parts of his life require investigation much keener than has ever been applied to them, and that many might easily be placed in a new light. Indeed, the whole of this most momentous section of ancient history ought to be recomposed with the critical scepticism of a Niebuhr, and the same comprehensive collation of authorities. In reality it is the hinge upon which turned the future destiny of the whole earth; and having therefore a common relation to all modern nations whatsoever, should naturally have been cultivated with the zeal which belongs to a personal concern. In general, the anecdotes which express most vividly the splendid character of the first Cæsar, are those which illustrate his defiance of danger in extremity; the prodigious energy and rapidity of his decisions and motions in the field; the skill with which he penetrated the designs of his enemies, and the exemplary speed with which he provided a remedy for disasters; the extraordinary presence of mind which he showed in turning adverse omens to his own advantage, as when, upon stumbling in coming on shore, (which was esteemed a capital omen of evil,) he transfigured as it were in one instant its whole

meaning by exclaiming, 'Thus do I take possession of thee, oh Africa!' in that way giving to an accident the semblance of a symbolic purpose; the grandeur of fortitude with which he faced the whole extent of a calamity when palliation could do no good, 'non negando, minuendove, sed insuper amplificando, *ementiendoque*;' as when, upon finding his soldiery alarmed at the approach of Juba, with forces really great, but exaggerated by their terrors, he addressed them in a military harangue to the following effect: 'Know that within a few days the king will come up with us, bringing with him sixty thousand legionaries, thirty thousand cavalry, one hundred thousand light troops, besides three hundred elephants. Such being the case, let me hear no more of conjectures and opinions, for you have now my warrant for the fact, whose information is past doubting. Therefore, be satisfied; otherwise, I will put every man of you on board some crazy old fleet, and whistle you down the tide — no matter under what winds, no matter towards what shore.' Finally, we might seek for the *characteristic* anecdotes of Cæsar in his unexampled liberalities and contempt of money.<sup>10</sup>

Upon this last topic it is the just remark of Casaubon, that some instances of Cæsar's munificence have been thought apocryphal, or to rest upon false readings, simply from ignorance of the heroic scale upon which the Roman splendors of that age pro-

ceeded. A forum which Cæsar built out of the products of his last campaign, by way of a present to the Roman people, cost him — for the ground merely on which it stood — nearly eight hundred thousand pounds. To the *citizens* of Rome (perhaps 300,000 persons) he presented, in one *congiary*, about two guineas and a half a head. To his army, in one *donation*, upon the termination of the civil war, he gave a sum which allowed about two hundred pounds a man to the infantry, and four hundred to the cavalry. It is true that the legionary troops were then much reduced by the sword of the enemy, and by the tremendous hardships of their last campaigns. In this, however, he did perhaps no more than repay a debt. For it is an instance of military attachment, beyond all that Wallenstein or any commander, the most beloved amongst his troops, has ever experienced, that, on the breaking out of the civil war, not only did the centurions of every legion severally maintain a horse soldier, but even the privates volunteered to serve without pay — and (what might seem impossible) without their daily rations. This was accomplished by subscriptions amongst themselves, the more opulent undertaking for the maintenance of the needy. Their disinterested love for Cæsar appeared in another and more difficult illustration; it was a traditionary anecdote in Rome, that the majority of those amongst Cæsar's troops, who had the misfortune to fall into the

enemy's hands, refused to accept their lives under the condition of serving against *him*.

In connection with this subject of his extraordinary munificence, there is one aspect of Cæsar's life which has suffered much from the misrepresentations of historians, and that is — the vast pecuniary embarrassments under which he labored, until the profits of war had turned the scale even more prodigiously in his favor. At one time of his life, when appointed to a foreign office, so numerous and so clamorous were his creditors, that he could not have left Rome on his public duties, had not Crassus come forward with assistance in money, or by promises, to the amount of nearly two hundred thousand pounds. And at another, he was accustomed to amuse himself with computing how much money it would require to make him worth exactly nothing (*i. e.* simply to clear him of debts); this, by one account, amounted to upwards of two millions sterling. Now the error of historians has been — to represent these debts as the original ground of his ambition and his revolutionary projects, as though the desperate condition of his private affairs had suggested a civil war to his calculations as the best or only mode of redressing it. But, on the contrary, his debts were the product of his ambition, and contracted from first to last in the service of his political intrigues, for raising and maintaining a powerful body of partisans, both in Rome and elsewhere. Whosoever,



indeed, will take the trouble to investigate the progress of Cæsar's ambition, from such materials as even yet remain, may satisfy himself that the scheme of revolutionizing the Republic, and placing himself at its head, was no growth of accident or circumstances; above all, that it did not arise upon any so petty and indirect an occasion as that of his debts; but that his debts were in their very first origin purely ministerial to his ambition; and that his revolutionary plans were at all periods of his life a direct and foremost object. In this there was in reality no want of patriotism; it had become evident to every-body that Rome, under its present constitution, must fall; and the sole question was — by whom? Even Pompey, not by nature of an aspiring turn, and prompted to his ambitious course undoubtedly by circumstances and the friends who besieged him, was in the habit of saying, 'Sylla potuit, ego non potero?' And the fact was, that if, from the death of Sylla, Rome recovered some transient show of constitutional integrity, that happened not by any lingering virtue that remained in her republican forms, but entirely through the equilibrium and mechanical counterpoise of rival factions. In a case, therefore, where no benefit of choice was allowed to Rome as to the thing, but only as to the person — where a revolution was certain, and the point left open to doubt simply by whom that revolution should be accomplished — Cæsar had (to say the least)

the same right to enter the arena in the character of candidate as could belong to any one of his rivals. And that he *did* enter that arena constructively, and by secret design, from his very earliest manhood, may be gathered from this — that he suffered no openings towards a revolution, provided they had any hope in them, to escape his participation. It is familiarly known that he was engaged pretty deeply in the conspiracy of Catiline,<sup>11</sup> and that he incurred considerable risk on that occasion; but it is less known, and has indeed escaped the notice of historians generally, that he was a party to at least two other conspiracies. There was even a fourth meditated by Crassus, which Cæsar so far encouraged as to undertake a journey to Rome from a very distant quarter, merely with a view to such chances as it might offer to him; but as it did not, upon examination, seem to him a very promising scheme, he judged it best to look coldly upon it, or not to embark in it by any personal co-operation. Upon these and other facts we build our inference — that the scheme of a revolution was the one great purpose of Cæsar, from his first entrance upon public life. Nor does it appear that he cared much by whom it was undertaken, provided only there seemed to be any sufficient resources for carrying it through, and for sustaining the first collision with the regular forces of the existing government. He relied, it seems, on his own personal superiority for raising him to the head of

affairs eventually, let who would take the nominal lead at first. To the same result, it will be found, tended the vast stream of Cæsar's liberalities. From the senator downwards to the lowest *fæx Romuli*, he had a hired body of dependents, both in and out of Rome, equal in numbers to a nation. In the provinces, and in distant kingdoms, he pursued the same schemes. Everywhere he had a body of mercenary partisans; kings are known to have taken his pay. And it is remarkable that even in his character of commander-in-chief, where the number of legions allowed to him for the accomplishment of his mission raised him for a number of years above all fear of coercion or control, he persevered steadily in the same plan of providing for the day when he might need assistance, not *from* the state, but *against* the state. For amongst the private anecdotes which came to light under the researches made into his history after his death, was this — that, soon after his first entrance upon his government in Gaul, he had raised, equipped, disciplined, and maintained from his own private funds, a legion amounting, perhaps, to six or seven thousand men, who were bound by no sacrament of military obedience to the state, nor owed fealty to any auspices except those of Cæsar. This legion, from the fashion of their crested helmets, which resembled the crested heads of a small bird of the lark species, received the popular name of the *Alauda* (or Lark) legion. And very sin-

gular it was that Cato, or Marcellus, or some amongst those enemies of Cæsar, who watched his conduct during the period of his Gaulish command with the vigilance of rancorous malice, should not have come to the knowledge of this fact; in which case we may be sure that it would have been denounced to the senate.

Such, then, for its purpose and its uniform motive, was the sagacious munificence of Cæsar. Apart from this motive, and considered in and for itself, and simply with a reference to the splendid forms which it often assumed, this munificence would furnish the materials for a volume. The public entertainments of Cæsar, his spectacles and shows, his *naumachiæ*, and the pomps of his unrivalled triumphs, (the closing triumphs of the Republic,) were severally the finest of their kind which had then been brought forward. Sea-fights were exhibited upon the grandest scale, according to every known variety of nautical equipment and mode of conflict, upon a vast lake formed artificially for that express purpose. Mimic land-fights were conducted, in which all the circumstances of real war were so faithfully rehearsed, that even elephants ‘indorsed with towers,’ twenty on each side, took part in the combat. Dramas were represented in every known language, (*per omnium linguarum histriones.*) And hence [that is, from the conciliatory feeling thus expressed towards the various tribes of foreigners resident in Rome] some have derived an explanation of

what is else a mysterious circumstance amongst the ceremonial observances at Cæsar's funeral — that all people of foreign nations then residing at Rome, distinguished themselves by the conspicuous share which they took in the public mourning; and that, beyond all other foreigners, the Jews for night after night kept watch and ward about the emperor's grave. Never before, according to traditions which lasted through several generations in Rome, had there been so vast a conflux of the human race congregated to any one centre, on any one attraction of business or of pleasure, as at Rome on occasion of these spectacles exhibited by Cæsar.

In our days, the greatest occasional gatherings of the human race are in India, especially at the great fair of the *Hurdwar*, in the northern part of Hindostan; a confluence of many millions is sometimes seen at that spot, brought together under the mixed influences of devotion and commercial business, and dispersed as rapidly as they had been convoked. Some such spectacle of nations crowding upon nations, and some such Babylonian confusion of dresses, complexions, languages, and jargons, was then witnessed at Rome. Accommodations within doors, and under roofs of houses, or of temples, was altogether impossible. Myriads encamped along the streets, and along the high-roads in the vicinity of Rome. Myriads of myriads lay stretched on the ground, without even the

slight protection of tents, in a vast circuit about the city. Multitudes of men, even senators, and others of the highest rank, were trampled to death in the crowds. And the whole family of man seemed at that time gathered together at the bidding of the great Dictator. But these, or any other themes connected with the public life of Cæsar, we notice only in those circumstances which have been overlooked, or partially represented by historians. Let us now, in conclusion, bring forward, from the obscurity in which they have hitherto lurked, the anecdotes which describe the habits of his private life, his tastes, and personal peculiarities.

In person, he was tall, fair, and of limbs distinguished for their elegant proportions and gracility. His eyes were black and piercing. These circumstances continued to be long remembered, and no doubt were constantly recalled to the eyes of all persons in the imperial palaces, by pictures, busts, and statues; for we find the same description of his personal appearance three centuries afterwards, in a work of the Emperor Julian's. He was a most accomplished horseman, and a master (*peritissimus*) in the use of arms. But notwithstanding his skill and horsemanship, it seems that, when he accompanied his army on marches, he walked oftener than he rode; no doubt, with a view to the benefit of his example, and to express that sympathy with his soldiers which gained

him their hearts so entirely. On other occasions, when travelling apart from his army, he seems more frequently to have rode in a carriage than on horseback. His purpose, in making this preference, must have been with a view to the transport of luggage. The carriage which he generally used was a *rheda*, a sort of gig, or rather curricule, for it was a four-wheeled carriage, and adapted (as we find from the imperial regulations for the public carriages, &c.) to the conveyance of about half a ton. The mere personal baggage which Cæsar carried with him, was probably considerable, for he was a man of the most elegant habits, and in all parts of his life sedulously attentive to elegance of personal appearance. The length of journeys which he accomplished within a given time, appears even to us at this day, and might well therefore appear to his contemporaries, truly astonishing. A distance of one hundred miles was no extraordinary day's journey for him in a *rheda*, such as we have described it. So elegant were his habits, and so constant his demand for the luxurious accommodations of polished life, as it then existed in Rome, that he is said to have carried with him, as indispensable parts of his personal baggage, the little lozenges and squares of ivory, and other costly materials, which were wanted for the tessellated flooring of his tent. Habits such as these will easily account for his travelling in a carriage rather than on horseback.

The courtesy and obliging disposition of Cæsar were notorious, and both were illustrated in some anecdotes which survived for generations in Rome. Dining on one occasion at a table, where the servants had inadvertently, for salad-oil, furnished some sort of coarse lamp-oil, Cæsar would not allow the rest of the company to point out the mistake to their host, for fear of shocking him too much by exposing the mistake. At another time, whilst halting at a little *cabaret*, when one of his retinue was suddenly taken ill, Cæsar resigned to his use the sole bed which the house afforded. Incidents as trifling as these, express the urbanity of Cæsar's nature; and, hence, one is more surprised to find the alienation of the senate charged, in no trifling degree, upon a failure in point of courtesy. Cæsar neglected to rise from his seat on their approaching him in a body with an address of congratulation. It is said, and we can believe it, that he gave deeper offence by this one defect in a matter of ceremonial observance, than by all his substantial attacks upon their privileges. What we find it difficult to believe, however, is not that result from the offence, but the possibility of the offence itself, from one so little arrogant as Cæsar, and so entirely a man of the world. He was told of the disgust which he had given, and we are bound to believe his apology, in which he charged it upon sickness, which would not at the moment allow him to maintain a standing atti-



tude. Certainly the whole tenor of his life was not courteous only, but kind; and, to his enemies, merciful in a degree which implied so much more magnanimity than men in general could understand, that by many it was put down to the account of weakness.

Weakness, however, there was none in Caius Cæsar: and, that there might be none, it was fortunate that conspiracy should have cut him off in the full vigor of his faculties, in the very meridian of his glory, and on the brink of completing a series of gigantic achievements. Amongst these are numbered — a digest of the entire body of the laws, even then become unwieldy and oppressive; the establishment of vast and comprehensive public libraries, Greek as well as Latin; the chastisement of Dacia; the conquest of Parthia; and the cutting a ship canal through the Isthmus of Corinth. The reformation of the calendar he had already accomplished. And of all his projects it may be said that they were equally patriotic in their purpose, and colossal in their proportions.

As an orator, Cæsar's merit was so eminent, that, according to the general belief, had he found time to cultivate this department of civil exertion, the precise supremacy of Cicero would have been made questionable, or the honors would have been divided. Cicero himself was of that opinion; and on different occasions applied the epithet *Splendidus* to Cæsar, as though in some exclusive sense, or with a peculiar emphasis, due

to him. His taste was much simpler, chaster, and disinclined to the *florid* and ornamental, than that of Cicero. So far he would, in that condition of the Roman culture and feeling, have been less acceptable to the public ; but, on the other hand, he would have compensated this disadvantage by much more of natural and Demosthenic fervor.

In literature, the merits of Cæsar are familiar to most readers. Under the modest title of *Commentaries*, he meant to offer the records of his Gallic and British campaigns, simply as notes, or memoranda, afterwards to be worked up by regular historians ; but, as Cicero observes, their merit was such in the eyes of the discerning, that all judicious writers shrank from the attempt to alter them. In another instance of his literary labors, he showed a very just sense of true dignity. Rightly conceiving that everything patriotic was dignified, and that to illustrate or polish his native language, was a service of real patriotism, he composed a work on the grammar and orthoepey of the Latin language. Cicero and himself were the only Romans of distinction in that age, who applied themselves with true patriotism to the task of purifying and ennobling their mother tongue. Both were aware of the transcendent quality of the Grecian literature ; but that splendor did not depress their hopes of raising their own to something of the same level. As respected the natural wealth of the two languages, it was the

private opinion of Cicero, that the Latin had the advantage; and if Cæsar did not accompany him to that length, he yet felt that it was but the more necessary to draw forth any single advantage which it really had.<sup>12</sup>

Was Cæsar, upon the whole, the greatest of men? Dr. Beattie once observed, that if that question were left to be collected from the suffrages already expressed in books, and scattered throughout the literature of all nations, the scale would be found to have turned prodigiously in Cæsar's favor, as against any single competitor; and there is no doubt whatsoever, that even amongst his own countrymen, and his own contemporaries, the same verdict would have been returned, had it been collected upon the famous principle of Themistocles, that *he* should be reputed the first, whom the greatest number of rival voices had pronounced the second.

## CHAPTER II.

THE situation of the Second Cæsar, at the crisis of the great Dictator's assassination, was so hazardous and delicate, as to confer interest upon a character not otherwise attractive. To many we know it was positively repulsive, and in the very highest degree. In particular, it is recorded of Sir William Jones, that he regarded this emperor with feelings of abhorrence so *personal* and deadly, as to refuse him his customary titular honors whenever he had occasion to mention him by name. Yet it was the whole Roman people that conferred upon him his title of *Augustus*. But Sir William, ascribing no force to the acts of a people who had sunk so low as to exult in their chains, and to decorate with honors the very instruments of their own vassalage, would not recognize this popular creation, and spoke of him always by his family name of Octavius. The flattery of the populace, by the way, must, in this instance, have been doubly acceptable to the emperor, first, for what it gave, and secondly, for what it concealed. Of his grand-uncle the first Cæsar, a tradition survives — that of all the distinctions created in his favor, either by the senate or the people, he put most value upon the laurel

crown which was voted to him after his last campaigns — a beautiful and conspicuous memorial to every eye of his great public acts, and at the same time an overshadowing veil of his one sole personal defect. This laurel diadem at once proclaimed his civic grandeur, and concealed his baldness, a defect which was more mortifying to a Roman than it would be to ourselves from the peculiar theory which then prevailed as to its probable origin. A gratitude of the same mixed quality must naturally have been felt by the Second Cæsar for his title of *Augustus*, which, whilst it illustrated his public character by the highest expression of majesty, set apart and sequestered to public functions, had also the agreeable effect of withdrawing from the general remembrance his obscure descent. For the Octavian house [*gens*] had in neither of its branches risen to any great splendor of civic distinction, and in his own, to little or none. The same titular decoration, therefore, so offensive to the celebrated Whig, was, in the eyes of Augustus, at once a trophy of public merit, a monument of public gratitude, and an effectual obliteration of his own natal obscurity.

But, if merely odious to men of Sir William's principles, to others the character of Augustus, in relation to the circumstances which surrounded him, was not without its appropriate interest. He was summoned in early youth, and without warning, to face a crisis

of tremendous hazard, being at the same time himself a man of no very great constitutional courage ; perhaps he was even a coward. And this we say without meaning to adopt as gospel truths all the party reproaches of Anthony. Certainly he was utterly unfurnished by nature with those endowments which *seemed* to be indispensable in a successor to the power of the great Dictator. But exactly in these deficiencies, and in certain accidents unfavorable to his ambition, lay his security. He had been adopted by his grand-uncle, Julius. That adoption made him, to all intents and purposes of law, the son of his great patron ; and doubtless, in a short time, this adoption would have been applied to more extensive uses, and as a station of vantage for introducing him to the public favor. From the inheritance of the Julian estates and family honors, he would have been trained to mount, as from a stepping-stone, to the inheritance of the Julian power and political station ; and the Roman people would have been familiarized to regard him in that character. But, luckily for himself, the finishing, or ceremonial acts, were yet wanting in this process—the political heirship was inchoate and imperfect. Tacitly understood, indeed, it was ; but had it been formally proposed and ratified, there cannot be a doubt that the young Octavius would have been pointed out to the vengeance of the patriots, and included in the scheme of the conspirators, as a fellow-victim with his

nominal father; and would have been cut off too suddenly to benefit by that re-action of popular feeling which saved the partisans of the Dictator, by separating the conspirators, and obliging them, without loss of time, to look to their own safety. It was by this fortunate accident that the young heir and adopted son of the first Cæsar not only escaped assassination, but was enabled to postpone indefinitely the final and military struggle for the vacant seat of empire, and in the meantime to maintain a coequal rank with the leaders in the state, by those arts and resources in which he was superior to his competitors. His place in the favor of Caius Julius was of power sufficient to give him a share in any triumvirate which could be formed; but, wanting the formality of a regular introduction to the people, and the ratification of their acceptance, that place was not sufficient to raise him permanently into the perilous and invidious station of absolute supremacy which he afterwards occupied. The *felicity* of Augustus was often vaunted by antiquity, (with whom success was not so much a test of merit as itself a merit of the highest quality,) and in no instance was this felicity more conspicuous than in the first act of his entrance upon the political scene. No doubt his friends and enemies alike thought of him, at the moment of Cæsar's assassination, as we now think of a young man heir-elect to some person of immense wealth, cut off by a sudden death before

he has had time to ratify a will in execution of his purposes. Yet in fact the case was far otherwise. Brought forward distinctly as the successor of Cæsar's power, had he even, by some favorable accident of absence from Rome, or otherwise, escaped being involved in that great man's fate, he would at all events have been thrown upon the instant necessity of defending his supreme station by arms. To have left it unasserted, when once solemnly created in his favor by a reversionary title, would have been deliberately to resign it. This would have been a confession of weakness liable to no disguise, and ruinous to any subsequent pretensions. Yet, without preparation of means, with no development of resources nor growth of circumstances, an appeal to arms would, in his case, have been of very doubtful issue. His true weapons, for a long period, were the arts of vigilance and dissimulation. Cultivating these, he was enabled to prepare for a contest which, undertaken prematurely, must have ruined him, and to raise himself to a station of even military preëminence to those who naturally, and by circumstances, were originally every way superior to himself.

The qualities in which he really excelled, the gifts of intrigue, patience, long suffering, dissimulation, and tortuous fraud, were thus brought into play, and allowed their full value. Such qualities had every chance of prevailing in the long run, against the noble



carelessness and the impetuosity of the passionate Anthony—and they *did* prevail. Always on the watch to lay hold of those opportunities which the generous negligence of his rival was but too frequently throwing in his way—unless by the sudden reverses of war and the accidents of battle, which as much as possible, and as long as possible, he declined—there could be little question in any man's mind, that eventually he would win his way to a solitary throne, by a policy so full of caution and subtlety. He was sure to risk nothing which could be had on easier terms; and nothing unless for a great overbalance of gain in prospect; to lose nothing which he had once gained; and in no case to miss an advantage, or sacrifice an opportunity, by any consideration of generosity. No modern insurance office but would have guaranteed an event depending upon the final success of Augustus, on terms far below those which they must in prudence have exacted from the fiery and adventurous Anthony. Each was an ideal in his own class. But Augustus, having finally triumphed, has met with more than justice from succeeding ages. Even Lord Bacon says, that, by comparison with Julius Cæsar, he was '*non tam impar quam dispar*,' surely a most extravagant encomium, applied to whomsoever. On the other hand, Anthony, amongst the most signal misfortunes of his life, might number it, that Cicero, the great dispenser of immortality, in

whose hands (more perhaps than in any one man's of any age) were the vials of good and evil fame, should happen to have been his bitter and persevering enemy. It is, however, some balance to this, that Shakspeare had a just conception of the original grandeur which lay beneath that wild tempestuous nature presented by Anthony to the eye of the indiscriminating world. It is to the honor of Shakspeare that he should have been able to discern the true coloring of this most original character under the smoke and tarnish of antiquity. It is no less to the honor of the great triumvir, that a strength of coloring should survive in his character, capable of baffling the wrongs and ravages of time. Neither is it to be thought strange that a character should have been misunderstood and falsely appreciated for nearly two thousand years. It happens not uncommonly, especially amongst an unimaginative people, like the Romans, that the characters of men are ciphers and enigmas to their own age, and are first read and interpreted by a far distant posterity. Stars are supposed to exist, whose light has been travelling for many thousands of years without having yet reached our system; and the eyes are yet unborn upon which their earliest rays will fall. Men like Mark Anthony, with minds of chaotic composition — light conflicting with darkness, proportions of colossal grandeur disfigured by unsymmetrical arrangement, the angelic in close neighborhood with the brutal — are

first read in their true meaning by an age learned in the philosophy of the human heart. Of this philosophy the Romans had, by the necessities of education and domestic discipline, not less than by original constitution of mind, the very narrowest visual range. In no literature whatsoever are so few tolerable notices to be found of any great truths in Psychology. Nor could this have been otherwise amongst a people who tried everything by the standard of *social* value; never seeking for a canon of excellence, in man considered abstractedly in and for himself, and as having an independent value — but always and exclusively in man as a gregarious being, and designed for social uses and functions. Not man in his own peculiar nature, but man in his relations to other men, was the station from which the Roman speculators took up their philosophy of human nature. Tried by such standard, Mark Anthony would be found wanting. As a citizen, he was irretrievably licentious, and therefore there needed not the bitter personal feud, which circumstances had generated between them, to account for the *acharnement* with which Cicero pursued him. Had Anthony been his friend even, or his near kinsman, Cicero must still have been his public enemy. And not merely for his vices; for even the grander features of his character, his towering ambition, his magnanimity, and the fascinations of his popular qualities, — were all, in the circumstances of those times, and in *his* position, of a tendency dangerously uncivic.

So remarkable was the opposition, at all points, between the second Cæsar and his rival, that whereas, Anthony even in his virtues seemed dangerous to the state, Octavius gave a civic coloring to his most indifferent actions, and, with a Machiavelian policy, observed a scrupulous regard to the forms of the Republic, after every fragment of the republican institutions, the privileges of the republican magistrates, and the functions of the great popular officers, had been absorbed into his own autocracy. Even in the most prosperous days of the Roman State, when the democratic forces balanced, and were balanced by, those of the aristocracy, it was far from being a general or common praise, that a man was of a civic turn of mind, *animo civili*. Yet this praise did Augustus affect, and in reality attain, at a time when the very object of all civic feeling was absolutely extinct; so much are men governed by words. Suetonius assures us, that many evidences were current even to his times of this popular disposition (*civilitas*) in the emperor; and that it survived every experience of servile adulation in the Roman populace, and all the effects of long familiarity with irresponsible power in himself. Such a moderation of feeling, we are almost obliged to consider as a genuine and unaffected expression of his real nature; for, as an artifice of policy, it had soon lost its uses. And it is worthy of notice, that with the army he laid aside those popular manners as soon as possible,

addressing them as *milites*, not (*according* to his earlier practice) as *commilitones*. It concerned his own security, to be jealous of encroachments on his power. But of his rank, and the honors which accompanied it, he seems to have been uniformly careless. Thus, he would never leave a town or enter it by daylight, unless some higher rule of policy obliged him to do so ; by which means he evaded a ceremonial of public honor which was burdensome to all the parties concerned in it. Sometimes, however, we find that men, careless of honors in their own persons, are glad to see them settling upon their family and immediate connections. But here again Augustus showed the sincerity of his moderation. For upon one occasion, when the whole audience in the Roman theatre had risen upon the entrance of his two adopted sons, at that time not seventeen years old, he was highly displeased, and even thought it necessary to publish his displeasure in a separate edict. It is another, and a striking illustration of his humility, that he willingly accepted of public appointments, and sedulously discharged the duties attached to them, in conjunction with colleagues who had been chosen with little regard to his personal partialities. In the debates of the senate, he showed the same equanimity ; suffering himself patiently to be contradicted, and even with circumstances of studied incivility. In the public elections, he gave his vote like any private citizen ;

and, when he happened to be a candidate himself, he canvassed the electors with the same earnestness of personal application, as any other candidate with the least possible title to public favor from present power or past services. But, perhaps by no expressions of his civic spirit did Augustus so much conciliate men's minds, as by the readiness with which he participated in their social pleasures, and by the uniform severity with which he refused to apply his influence in any way which could disturb the pure administration of justice. The Roman juries (*judices* they were called), were very corrupt; and easily swayed to an unconscientious verdict, by the appearance in court of any great man on behalf of one of the parties interested; nor was such an interference with the course of private justice any ways injurious to the great man's character. The wrong which he promoted did but the more forcibly proclaim the warmth and fidelity of his friendships. So much the more generally was the uprightness of the emperor appreciated, who would neither tamper with justice himself nor countenance any motion in that direction, though it were to serve his very dearest friend, either by his personal presence, or by the use of his name. And, as if it had been a trifle merely to forbear, and to show his regard to justice in this negative way, he even allowed himself to be summoned as a witness on trials, and showed no anger when his own evidence was overborne by stronger on the other side.

This disinterested love of justice, and an integrity, so rare in the great men of Rome, could not but command the reverence of the people. But their affection, doubtless, was more conciliated by the freedom with which the emperor accepted invitations from all quarters, and shared continually in the festal pleasures of his subjects. This practice, however, he discontinued, or narrowed, as he advanced in years. Suetonius, who, as a true anecdote-monger, would solve every thing, and account for every change by some definite incident, charges this alteration in the emperor's condescensions upon one particular party at a wedding feast, where the crowd incommoded him much by their pressure and heat. But, doubtless, it happened to Augustus as to other men ; his spirits failed, and his powers of supporting fatigue or bustle, as years stole upon him. Changes, coming by insensible steps, and not willingly acknowledged, for some time escape notice ; until some sudden shock reminds a man forcibly to do that which he has long meditated in an irresolute way. The marriage banquet may have been the particular occasion from which Augustus stepped into the habits of old age, but certainly not the cause of so entire a revolution in his mode of living.

It might seem to throw some doubt, if not upon the fact, yet at least upon the sincerity, of his *civism*, that undoubtedly Augustus cultivated his kingly connections with considerable anxiety. It may have been

upon motives merely political that he kept at Rome the children of nearly all the kings then known as allies or vassals of the Roman power : a curious fact, and not generally known. In his own palace were reared a number of youthful princes ; and they were educated jointly with his own children. It is also upon record, that in many instances the fathers of these princes spontaneously repaired to Rome, and there assuming the Roman dress — as an expression of reverence to the majesty of the omnipotent State — did personal ‘ suit and service ’ (*more clientum*) to Augustus. It is an anecdote of not less curiosity, that a whole ‘ college ’ of kings subscribed money for a temple at Athens, to be dedicated in the name of Augustus. Throughout his life, indeed, this emperor paid a marked attention to all royal houses then known to Rome, as occupying the thrones upon the vast margin of the empire. It is true that in part this attention might be interpreted as given politically to so many lieutenants, wielding a remote or inaccessible power for the benefit of Rome. And the children of these kings might be regarded as hostages, ostensibly entertained for the sake of education, but really as pledges for their parents’ fidelity, and also with a view to the large reversionary advantages which might be expected to arise upon the basis of so early and affectionate a connection. But it is not the less true, that, at one period of his life, Augustus did certainly meditate some closer personal connection



with the royal families of the earth. He speculated, undoubtedly, on a marriage for himself with some barbarous princess, and at one time designed his daughter Julia as a wife for Cotiso, the king of the Getæ. Superstition perhaps disturbed the one scheme, and policy the other. He married, as is well known, for his final wife, and the partner of his life through its whole triumphant stage, Livia Drusilla; compelling her husband, Tiberius Nero, to divorce her, notwithstanding she was then six months advanced in pregnancy. With this lady, who was distinguished for her beauty, it is certain that he was deeply in love; and that might be sufficient to account for the marriage. It is equally certain, however, upon the concurring evidence of independent writers, that this connection had an oracular sanction — not to say suggestion; a circumstance *which was long remembered*, and was afterwards noticed by the Christian poet Prudentius:

‘ Idque Deam sortes et Apollinis antra dederunt  
Consilium : nunquam melius nam cedere tædas  
Responsum est, quàm cum prægnans nova nupta jugatur.’

His daughter Julia had been promised by turns, and always upon reasons of state, to a whole muster-roll of suitors; first of all, to a son of Mark Anthony; secondly, to the barbarous king; thirdly, to her first cousin — that Marcellus, the son of Octavia, only sister to Augustus, whose early death, in the midst of great expectations, Virgil has so beautifully introduced into

the vision of Roman grandeurs as yet unborn, which Æneas beholds in the shades; fourthly, she was promised (and this time the promise was kept) to the fortunate soldier, Agrippa, whose low birth was not permitted to obscure his military merits. By him she had a family of children, upon whom, if upon any in this world the wrath of Providence seems to have rested; for, excepting one, and in spite of all the favors that earth and heaven could unite to shower upon them, all came to an early, a violent, and an infamous end. Fifthly, upon the death of Agrippa, and again upon motives of policy, and in atrocious contempt of all the ties that nature and the human heart and human laws have hallowed, she was promised, (if that word may be applied to the violent obtrusion upon a man's bed of one who was doubly a curse—first, for what she brought, and, secondly, for what she took away,) and given to Tiberius, the future emperor. Upon the whole, as far as we can at this day make out the connection of a man's acts and purposes, which, even to his own age, were never entirely cleared up, it is probable that, so long as the triumvirate survived, and so long as the condition of Roman power or intrigues, and the distribution of Roman influence, were such as to leave a possibility that any new triumvirate should arise—so long Augustus was secretly meditating a retreat for himself at some barbarous court, against any sudden reverse of fortune

by means of a domestic connection, which should give him the claim of a kinsman. Such a court, however unable to make head against the collective power of Rome, might yet present a front of resistance to any single partisan who should happen to acquire a brief ascendancy; or, at the worst, as a merely defensive power, might offer a retreat, secure in distance, and difficult of access; or might be available as a means of delay for recovering from some else fatal defeat. It is certain that Augustus viewed Egypt with jealousy as a province, which might be turned to account in some such way by any inspiring insurgent. And it must have often struck him as a remarkable circumstance, which by good luck had turned out entirely to the advantage of his own family, but which might as readily have had an opposite result, that the three decisive battles of Pharsalia, of Thapsus, and of Munda, in which the empire of the world was three times over staked as the prize, had severally brought upon the defeated leaders a ruin which was total, absolute, and final. One hour had seen the whole fabric of their aspiring fortunes demolished; and no resource was left to them but either in suicide, (which, accordingly even Cæsar had meditated at one stage of the battle of Munda, when it seemed to be going against him,) or in the mercy of the victor.

That a victor in a hundred fights should in his hundred-and-first,<sup>13</sup> as in his first, risk the loss of that

particular battle, is inseparable from the condition of man, and the uncertainty of human means; but that the loss of this one battle should be equally fatal and irrecoverable with the loss of his first, that it should leave him with means no more cemented, and resources no better matured for retarding his fall, and throwing a long succession of hindrances in the way of his conqueror, argues some essential defect of system. Under our modern policy, military power — though it may be the growth of one man's life — soon takes root; a succession of campaigns is required for its extirpation; and it revolves backwards to its final extinction through all the stages by which originally it grew. On the Roman system this was mainly impossible from the solitariness of the Roman power; co-rival nations who might balance the victorious party, there were absolutely none; and all the underlings hastened to make their peace, whilst peace was yet open to them, on the known terms of absolute treachery to their former master, and instant surrender to the victor of the hour. For this capital defect in the tenure of Roman power, no matter in whose hands deposited, there was no absolute remedy. Many a sleepless night, during the perilous game which he played with Anthony, must have familiarized Octavius with that view of the risk, which to some extent was inseparable from his position as the leader in such a struggle carried on in such an empire. In this di-

lemma, struck with the extreme necessity of applying some palliation to the case, we have no doubt that Augustus would devise the scheme of laying some distant king under such obligations to fidelity as would suffice to stand the first shock of misfortune. Such a person would have power enough of a direct military kind, to face the storm at its outbreak. He would have power of another kind in his distance. He would be sustained by the courage of hope, as a kinsman having a contingent interest in a kinsman's prosperity. And, finally, he would be sustained by the courage of despair, as one who never could expect to be trusted by the opposite party. In the worst case, such a prince would always offer a breathing time and a respite to his friends, were it only by his remoteness, and if not the *means* of rallying, yet at least the *time* for rallying, more especially as the escape to his frontier would be easy to one who had long forecast it. We can hardly doubt that Augustus meditated such schemes; that he laid them aside only as his power began to cement and to knit together after the battle of Actium; and that the memory and the prudential tradition of this plan survived in the imperial family so long as itself survived. Amongst other anecdotes of the same tendency, two are recorded of Nero, the emperor in whom expired the line of the original Cæsars, which strengthen us in a belief of what is otherwise in itself so probable. Nero, in his first

distractions, upon receiving the fatal tidings of the revolt in Gaul, when reviewing all possible plans of escape from the impending danger, thought at intervals of throwing himself on the protection of the barbarous King Vologesus. And twenty years afterwards, when the Pseudo-Nero appeared, he found a strenuous champion and protector in the King of the Parthians. Possibly, had an opportunity offered for searching the Parthian chancery, some treaty would have been found binding the kings of Parthia, from the age of Augustus through some generations downwards, in requital of services there specified, or of treasures lodged, to secure a perpetual asylum to the prosperity of the Julian family.

The cruelties of Augustus were perhaps equal in atrocity to any which are recorded ; and the equivocal apology for those acts (one which might as well be used to aggravate as to palliate the case) is, that they were not prompted by a ferocious nature, but by calculating policy. He once actually slaughtered upon an altar a large body of his prisoners ; and such was the contempt with which he was regarded by some of that number, that, when led out to death, they saluted their other proscriber, Anthony, with military honors, acknowledging merit even in an enemy, but Augustus they passed with scornful silence, or with loud reproaches. Too certainly no man has ever contended for empire with unsullied conscience, or laid pure

hands upon the ark of so magnificent a prize. Every friend to Augustus must have wished that the twelve years of his struggle might for ever be blotted out from human remembrance. During the forty-two years of his prosperity and his triumph, being above fear, he showed the natural lenity of his temper.

That prosperity, in a public sense, has been rarely equalled; but far different was his fate, and memorable was the contrast, within the circuit of his own family. This lord of the universe groaned as often as the ladies of his house, his daughter and grand-daughter, were mentioned. The shame which he felt on their account, led him even to unnatural designs, and to wishes not less so; for at one time he entertained a plan for putting the elder Julia to death — and at another, upon hearing that Phœbe (one of the female slaves in his household) had hanged herself, he exclaimed audibly, — ‘Would that I had been the father of Phœbe!’ It must, however, be granted, that in this miserable affair he behaved with very little of his usual discretion. In the first paroxysms of his rage, on discovering his daughter’s criminal conduct, he made a communication of the whole to the senate. That body could do nothing in such a matter, either by act or by suggestion; and in a short time, as every-body could have foreseen, he himself repented of his own want of self-command. Upon the whole, it cannot be denied, that, according to the remark of Jeremy Taylor, of all the men signally

decorated by history, Augustus Cæsar is that one who exemplifies, in the most emphatic terms, the mixed tenor of human life, and the equitable distribution, even on this earth, of good and evil fortune. He made himself master of the world, and against the most formidable competitors ; his power was absolute, from the rising to the setting sun ; and yet in his own house, where the peasant who does the humblest chares, claims an undisputed authority, he was baffled, dishonored, and made ridiculous. He was loved by nobody ; and if, at the moment of his death, he desired his friends to dismiss him from this world by the common expression of scenical applause, (*vos plaudite !*) in that valedictory injunction he expressed inadvertently the true value of his own long life, which, in strict candor, may be pronounced one continued series of histrionic efforts, and of excellent acting, adapted to selfish ends.



## CHAPTER III.

THE next three emperors, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, were the last princes who had any connection by blood <sup>14</sup> with the Julian house. In Nero, the sixth emperor, expired the last of the Cæsars, who was such in reality. These three were also the first in that long line of monsters, who, at different times, under the title of Cæsars, dishonored humanity more memorably, than was possible, except in the cases of those (if any such can be named) who have abused the same enormous powers in times of the same civility, and in defiance of the same general illumination. But for them it is a fact, that some crimes, which now stain the page of history, would have been accounted fabulous dreams of impure romancers, taxing their extravagant imaginations to create combinations of wickedness more hideous than civilized men would tolerate, and more unnatural than the human heart could conceive. Let us, by way of example, take a short chapter from the diabolical life of Caligula : — In what way did he treat his nearest and tenderest female connections ? His mother had been tortured and murdered by another tyrant almost as fiendish as himself. She was happily removed from his cruelty. Disdaining, however, to

acknowledge any connection with the blood of so obscure a man as Agrippa, he publicly gave out that his mother was indeed the daughter of Julia, but by an incestuous commerce with her father Augustus. His three sisters he debauched. One died, and her he canonized; the other two he prostituted to the basest of his own attendants. Of his wives, it would be hard to say whether they were first sought and won with more circumstances of injury and outrage, or dismissed with more insult and levity. The one whom he treated best, and with most profession of love, and who commonly rode by his side, equipped with spear and shield, to his military inspections and reviews of the soldiery, though not particularly beautiful, was exhibited to his friends at banquets in a state of absolute nudity. His motive for treating her with so much kindness, was, probably that she brought him a daughter; and her he acknowledged as his own child, from the early brutality with which she attacked the eyes and cheeks of other infants who were presented to her as play-fellows. Hence it would appear that he was aware of his own ferocity, and treated it as a jest. The levity, indeed, which he mingled with his worst and most inhuman acts, and the slightness of the occasions upon which he delighted to hang his most memorable atrocities, aggravated their impression at the time, and must have contributed greatly to sharpen the sword of vengeance. His palace happened to be

contiguous to the circus. Some seats, it seems, were open indiscriminately to the public; consequently, the only way in which they could be appropriated, was by taking possession of them as early as the midnight preceding any great exhibitions. Once, when it happened that his sleep was disturbed by such an occasion, he sent in soldiers to eject them; and with orders so rigorous, as it appeared by the event, that in this singular tumult, twenty Roman knights, and as many mothers of families, were cudgelled to death upon the spot, to say nothing of what the reporter calls ‘innumeram turbam ceteram.’

But this is a trifle to another anecdote reported by the same authority: — On some occasion it happened that a dearth prevailed, either generally of cattle, or of such cattle as were used for feeding the wild beasts reserved for the bloody exhibitions of the amphitheatre. Food could be had, and perhaps at no very exorbitant price, but on terms somewhat higher than the ordinary market price. A slight excuse served with Caligula for acts the most monstrous. Instantly repairing to the public jails, and causing all the prisoners to pass in review before him (*custodiarum seriem recognoscens*), he pointed to two bald-headed men, and ordered that the whole file of intermediate persons should be marched off to the dens of the wild beasts: ‘Tell them off,’ said he, ‘from the bald man to the bald man.’ Yet these were prisoners committed, not for

punishment, but trial. Nor, had it been otherwise, were the charges against them equal, but running through every gradation of guilt. But the *elogia*, or records of their commitment, he would not so much as look at. With such inordinate capacities for cruelty, we cannot wonder that he should in his common conversation have deplored the tameness and insipidity of his own times and reign, as likely to be marked by no wide-spreading calamity. ‘Augustus,’ said he, ‘was happy; for in his reign occurred the slaughter of Varus and his legions. Tiberius was happy; for in his occurred that glorious fall of the great amphitheatre at Fidenæ. But for me — alas! alas!’ And then he would pray earnestly for fire or slaughter — pestilence or famine. Famine indeed was to some extent in his own power; and accordingly, as far as his courage would carry him, he did occasionally try that mode of tragedy upon the people of Rome, by shutting up the public granaries against them. As he blended his mirth and a truculent sense of the humorous with his cruelties, we cannot wonder that he should soon blend his cruelties with his ordinary festivities, and that his daily banquets would soon become insipid without them. Hence he required a daily supply of executions in his own halls and banqueting rooms; nor was a dinner held to be complete without such a dessert. Artists were sought out who had dexterity and strength enough to do what Lucan somewhere calls *ensem rotare*, that

is, to cut off a human head with one whirl of the sword. Even this became insipid, as wanting one main element of misery to the sufferer, and an indispensable condiment to the jaded palate of the connoisseur, viz., a lingering duration. As a pleasant variety, therefore, the tormentors were introduced with their various instruments of torture; and many a dismal tragedy in that mode of human suffering was conducted in the sacred presence during the emperor's hours of amiable relaxation.

The result of these horrid indulgences was exactly what we might suppose, that even such scenes ceased to irritate the languid appetite, and yet that without them life was not endurable. Jaded and exhausted as the sense of pleasure had become in Caligula, still it could be roused into any activity by nothing short of these murderous luxuries. Hence, it seems, that he was continually tampering and dallying with the thought of murder; and like the old Parisian jeweller Cardillac, in Louis XIV.'s time, who was stung with a perpetual lust for murdering the possessors of fine diamonds—not so much for the value of the prize (of which he never hoped to make any use), as from an unconquerable desire of precipitating himself into the difficulties and hazards of the murder,—Caligula never failed to experience (and sometimes even to acknowledge) a secret temptation to any murder which seemed either more than usually abominable, or more

than usually difficult. Thus, when the two consuls were seated at his table, he burst out into sudden and profuse laughter ; and upon their courteously requesting to know what witty and admirable conceit might be the occasion of the imperial mirth, he frankly owned to them, and doubtless he did not improve their appetites by this confession, that in fact he was laughing, and that he could not *but* laugh, (and then the monster laughed immoderately again,) at the pleasant thought of seeing them both headless, and that with so little trouble to himself, (*uno suo nuto*,) he could have both their throats cut. No doubt he was continually balancing the arguments for and against such little *escapades* ; nor had any person a reason for security in the extraordinary obligations, whether of hospitality or of religious vows, which seemed to lay him under some peculiar restraints in that case above all others ; for such circumstances of peculiarity, by which the murder would be stamped with unusual atrocity, were but the more likely to make its fascinations irresistible. Hence he dallied with the thoughts of murdering her whom he loved best, and indeed exclusively — his wife Cæsonia ; and whilst fondling her, and toying playfully with her polished throat, he was distracted (as he half insinuated to her) between the desire of caressing it, which might be often repeated, and that of cutting it, which could be gratified but once.

Nero (for as to Claudius, he came too late to the

throne to indulge any propensities of this nature with so little discretion) was but a variety of the same species. He also was an amateur, and an enthusiastic amateur of murder. But as this taste, in the most ingenious hands, is limited and monotonous in its modes of manifestation, it would be tedious to run through the long Suetonian roll-call of his peccadilloes in this way. One only we shall cite, to illustrate the amorous delight with which he pursued any murder which happened to be seasoned highly to his taste by enormous atrocity, and by almost unconquerable difficulty. It would really be pleasant, were it not for the revolting consideration of the persons concerned, and their relation to each other, to watch the tortuous pursuit of the hunter, and the doubles of the game, in this obstinate chase. For certain reasons of state, as Nero attempted to persuade himself, but in reality because no other crime had the same attractions of unnatural horror about it, he resolved to murder his mother Agrippina. This being settled, the next thing was to arrange the mode and the tools. Naturally enough, according to the custom then prevalent in Rome, he first attempted the thing by poison. The poison failed; for Agrippina, anticipating tricks of this kind, had armed her constitution against them, like Mithridates; and daily took potent antidotes and prophylactics. Or else (which is more probable) the emperor's agent in such purposes, fearing his sudden repentance and remorse on first

hearing of his mother's death, or possibly even witnessing her agonies, had composed a poison of inferior strength. This had certainly occurred in the case of Britannicus, who had thrown off with ease the first dose administered to him by Nero. Upon which he had summoned to his presence the woman employed in the affair, and compelling her by threats to mingle a more powerful potion in his own presence, had tried it successively upon different animals, until he was satisfied with its effects ; after which, immediately inviting Britannicus to a banquet, he had finally dispatched him. On Agrippina, however, no changes in the poison, whether of kind or strength, had any effect : so that, after various trials, this mode of murder was abandoned, and the emperor addressed himself to other plans. The first of these was some curious mechanical device, by which a false ceiling was to have been suspended by bolts above her bed ; and in the middle of the night, the bolt being suddenly drawn, a vast weight would have descended with a ruinous destruction to all below. This scheme, however, taking air from the indiscretion of some amongst the accomplices, reached the ears of Agrippina ; upon which the old lady looked about her too sharply to leave much hope in that scheme : so *that* also was abandoned. Next, he conceived the idea of an artificial ship, which, at the touch of a few springs, might fall to pieces in deep water. Such a ship was prepared, and stationed at a suitable



point. But the main difficulty remained, which was to persuade the old lady to go on board. Not that she knew in this case *who* had been the ship-builder, for that would have ruined all ; but it seems that she took it ill to be hunted in this murderous spirit ; and was out of humor with her son ; besides, that any proposal coming from him, though previously indifferent to her, would have instantly become suspected. To meet this difficulty a sort of reconciliation was proposed, and a very affectionate message sent, which had the effect of throwing Agrippina off her guard, and seduced her to Baia for the purpose of joining the emperor's party at a great banquet held in commemoration of a solemn festival. She came by water in a sort of light frigate, and was to return in the same way. Meantime Nero tampered with the commander of her vessel, and prevailed upon him to wreck it. What was to be done ? The great lady was anxious to return to Rome, and no proper conveyance was at hand. Suddenly it was suggested, as if by chance, that a ship of the emperor's, new and properly equipped, was moored at a neighboring station. This was readily accepted by Agrippina : the emperor accompanied her to the place of embarkation, took a most tender leave of her, and saw her set sail. It was necessary that the vessel should get into deep water before the experiment could be made ; and with the utmost agitation this pious son awaited news of the result. Suddenly a messenger

rushed breathless into his presence, and horrified him by the joyful information that his august mother had met with an alarming accident ; but, by the blessing of Heaven, had escaped safe and sound, and was now on her road to mingle congratulations with her affectionate son. The ship, it seems, had done its office ; the mechanism had played admirably ; but who can provide for everything ? The old lady, it turned out, could swim like a duck ; and the whole result had been to refresh her with a little sea-bathing. Here was worshipful intelligence. Could any man's temper be expected to stand such continued sieges ? Money, and trouble, and infinite contrivance, wasted upon one old woman, who absolutely would not, upon any terms, be murdered ! Provoking it certainly was ; and of a man like Nero it could not be expected that he should any longer dissemble his disgust, or put up with such repeated affronts. He rushed upon his simple congratulating friend, swore that he had come to murder him, and as nobody could have suborned him but Agrippina, he ordered her off to instant execution. And, unquestionably, if people will not be murdered quietly and in a civil way, they must expect that such forbearance is not to continue for ever ; and obviously have themselves only to blame for any harshness or violence which they may have rendered necessary.

It is singular, and shocking at the same time, to mention, that, for this atrocity, Nero did absolutely

receive solemn congratulations from all orders of men. With such evidences of base servility in the public mind, and of the utter corruption which they had sustained in their elementary feelings, it is the less astonishing that he should have made other experiments upon the public patience, which seem expressly designed to try how much it would support. Whether he were really the author of the desolating fire which consumed Rome for six days<sup>15</sup> and seven nights, and drove the mass of the people into the tombs and sepulchres for shelter, is yet a matter of some doubt. But one great presumption against it, founded on its desperate imprudence, as attacking the people in their primary comforts, is considerably weakened by the enormous servility of the Romans in the case just stated: they who could volunteer congratulations to a son for butchering his mother, (no matter on what pretended suspicions,) might reasonably be supposed incapable of any resistance which required courage even in a case of self-defence, or of just revenge. The direct reasons, however, for implicating him in this affair, seem at present insufficient. He was displeased, it seems, with the irregularity and unsightliness of the antique buildings, and also with the streets, as too narrow and winding, (*angustiis flexurisque vicorum.*) But in this he did but express what was no doubt the common judgment of all his contemporaries, who had seen the beautiful cities of Greece and Asia

Minor. The Rome of that time was in many parts built of wood; and there is much probability that it must have been a *picturesque* city, and in parts almost grotesque. But it is remarkable, and a fact which we have nowhere seen noticed, that the ancients, whether Greeks or Romans, had no eye for the picturesque; nay, that it was a sense utterly unawakened amongst them; and that the very conception of the picturesque, as of a thing distinct from the beautiful, is not once alluded to through the whole course of ancient literature, nor would it have been intelligible to any ancient critic; so that, whatever attraction for the eye might exist in the Rome of that day, there is little doubt that it was of a kind to be felt only by modern spectators. Mere dissatisfaction with its external appearance, which must have been a pretty general sentiment, argued, therefore, no necessary purpose of destroying it. Certainly it would be weightier ground of suspicion, if it were really true that some of his agents were detected on the premises of different senators in the act of applying combustibles to their mansions. But this story wears a very fabulous air. For why resort to the private dwellings of great men, where any intruder was sure of attracting notice, when the same effect and with the same deadly results, might have been attained quietly and secretly in so many of the humble Roman *cænacula*?

The great loss on this memorable occasion was in

the heraldic and ancestral honors of the city. Historic Rome then went to wreck for ever. Then perished the *domus priscorum ducum hostilibus adhuc spoliis adornatæ*; the 'rostral' palace; the mansion of the Pompeys; the Blenheims and the Strathfieldsays of the Scipios, the Marcelli, the Paulli, and the Cæsars; then perished the aged trophies from Carthage and from Gaul; and, in short, as the historian sums up the lamentable desolation, '*quidquid visendum atque memorabile ex antiquitate duraverat.*' And this of itself might lead one to suspect the emperor's hand as the original agent; for by no one act was it possible so entirely and so suddenly to wean the people from their old republican recollections, and in one week to obliterate the memorials of their popular forces, and the trophies of many ages. The old people of Rome were gone; their characteristic dress even was gone; for already in the time of Augustus they had laid aside the *toga*, and assumed the cheaper and scantier *pænula*, so that the eye sought in vain for Virgil's

'Romanus rerum dominos gentemque *togatam.*'

Why then, after all the constituents of Roman grandeur had passed away, should their historical trophies survive, recalling to them the scenes of departed heroism, in which they had no personal property, and suggesting to them vain hopes, which for them were never to be other than chimeras? Even in that sense, therefore, and as a great deposi-

tory of heart-stirring historical remembrances, Rome was profitably destroyed; and in any other sense, whether for health or for the conveniences of polished life, or for architectural magnificence, there never was a doubt that the Roman people gained infinitely by this conflagration. For, like London, it arose from its ashes with a splendor proportioned to its vast expansion of wealth and population; and marble took the place of wood. For the moment, however, this event must have been felt by the people as an overwhelming calamity. And it serves to illustrate the passive endurance and timidity of the popular temper, and to what extent it might be provoked with impunity, that in this state of general irritation and effervescence, Nero absolutely forbade them to meddle with the ruins of their own dwellings—taking that charge upon himself, with a view to the vast wealth which he anticipated from sifting the rubbish. And, as if that mode of plunder were not sufficient, he exacted compulsory contributions to the rebuilding of the city so indiscriminately, as to press heavily upon all men's finances; and thus, in the public account which universally imputed the fire to him, he was viewed as a twofold robber, who sought to heal one calamity by the infliction of another and a greater.

The monotony of wickedness and outrage becomes at length fatiguing to the coarsest and most callous senses; and the historian, even, who caters professedly

for the taste which feeds upon the monstrous and the hyperbolical, is glad at length to escape from the long evolution of his insane atrocities, to the striking and truly scenical catastrophe of retribution which overtook them, and avenged the wrongs of an insulted world. Perhaps history contains no more impressive scenes than those in which the justice of Providence at length arrested the monstrous career of Nero.

It was at Naples, and by a remarkable fatality, on the very anniversary of his mother's murder, that he received the first intelligence of the revolt in Gaul under the Proprætor Vindex. This news for about a week he treated with levity ; and, like Henry VII. of England, who was nettled, not so much at being proclaimed a rebel, as because he was described under the slighting denomination of 'one Henry Tidder or Tudor,' he complained bitterly that Vindex had mentioned him by his family name of *Ænobarbus*, rather than his assumed one of Nero. But much more keenly he resented the insulting description of himself as a 'miserable harper,' appealing to all about him whether they had ever known a better, and offering to stake the truth of all the other charges against himself upon the accuracy of this in particular. So little even in this instance was he alive to the true point of the insult ; not thinking it any disgrace that a Roman emperor should be chiefly known to the world in the character of a harper, but only if he should happen

to be a bad one. Even in those days, however, imperfect as were the means of travelling, rebellion moved somewhat too rapidly to allow any long interval of security so light-minded as this. One courier followed upon the heels of another, until he felt the necessity for leaving Naples; and he returned to Rome, as the historian says, *prætrepidus*; by which word, however, according to its genuine classical acceptation, we apprehend is not meant that he was highly alarmed, but only that he was in a great hurry. That he was not yet under any real alarm (for he trusted in certain prophecies, which, like those made to the Scottish tyrant 'kept the promise to the ear, but broke it to the sense,') is pretty evident from his conduct on reaching the capitol. For, without any appeal to the senate or the people, but sending out a few summonses to some men of rank, he held a hasty council, which he speedily dismissed, and occupied the rest of the day with experiments on certain musical instruments of recent invention, in which the keys were moved by hydraulic contrivances. He had come to Rome, it appeared, merely from a sense of decorum.

Suddenly, however, arrived news, which fell upon him with the force of a thunderbolt, that the revolt had extended to the Spanish provinces, and was headed by Galba. He fainted upon hearing this; and falling to the ground, lay for a long time lifeless, as



it seemed, and speechless. Upon coming to himself again, he tore his robe, struck his forehead, and exclaimed aloud — that for him all was over. In this agony of mind, it strikes across the utter darkness of the scene with the sense of a sudden and cheering flash, recalling to us the possible goodness and fidelity of human nature — when we read that one humble creature adhered to him, and, according to her slender means, gave him consolation during these trying moments ; this was the woman who had tended his infant years ; and she now recalled to his remembrance such instances of former princes in adversity, as appeared fitted to sustain his drooping spirits. It seems, however, that, according to the general course of violent emotions, the rebound of high spirits was in proportion to his first despondency. He omitted nothing of his usual luxury or self-indulgence, and he even found spirits for going *incognito* to the theatre, where he took sufficient interest in the public performances, to send a message to a favorite actor. At times, even in this hopeless situation, his native ferocity returned upon him, and he was believed to have framed plans for removing all his enemies at once — the leaders of the rebellion, by appointing successors to their offices, and secretly sending assassins to dispatch their persons ; the senate, by poison at a great banquet ; the Gaulish provinces, by delivering them up for pillage to the army ; the city, by again setting it on fire

whilst, at the same time, a vast number of wild beasts was to have been turned loose upon the unarmed populace — for the double purpose of destroying them, and of distracting their attention from the fire. But, as the mood of his frenzy changed, these sanguinary schemes were abandoned, (not, however, under any feelings of remorse, but from mere despair of effecting them,) and on the same day, *but after a luxurious dinner*, the imperial monster grew bland and pathetic in his ideas; he would proceed to the rebellious army; he would present himself unarmed to their view; and would recall them to their duty by the mere spectacle of his tears. Upon the pathos with which he would weep he was resolved to rely entirely. And having received the guilty to his mercy without distinction, upon the following day he would unite *his* joy with *their* joy, and would chant hymns of victory (*epinicia*) — ‘which, by the way,’ said he, suddenly, breaking off to his favorite pursuits, ‘it is necessary that I should immediately compose.’ This caprice vanished like the rest; and he made an effort to enlist the slaves and citizens into his service, and to raise by extortion a large military chest. But in the midst of these vascillating purposes fresh tidings surprised him — other armies had revolted, and the rebellion was spreading contagiously. This consummation of his alarms reached him at dinner; and the expressions of his angry fears took even a scenical air; he tore the

dispatches, upset the table, and dashed to pieces upon the ground two crystal beakers — which had a high value as works of art, even in the *Aurea Domus*, from the sculptures which adorned them.

He now prepared for flight; and sending forward commissioners to prepare the fleet at Ostia for his reception, he tampered with such officers of the army as were at hand, to prevail upon them to accompany his retreat. But all showed themselves indisposed to such schemes, and some flatly refused. Upon which he turned to other counsels; sometimes meditating a flight to the King of Parthia, or even to throw himself on the mercy of Galba; sometimes inclining rather to the plan of venturing into the forum in mourning apparel, begging pardon for his past offences, and, as a last resource, entreating that he might receive the appointment of Egyptian prefect. This plan, however, he hesitated to adopt, from some apprehension that he should be torn to pieces in his road to the forum; and, at all events, he concluded to postpone it to the following day. Meantime events were now hurrying to their catastrophe, which for ever anticipated that intention. His hours were numbered, and the closing scene was at hand.

In the middle of the night he was aroused from slumber with the intelligence that the military guard, who did duty at the palace, had all quitted their posts. Upon this the unhappy prince leaped from his couch,

never again to taste the luxury of sleep, and dispatched messengers to his friends. No answers were returned; and upon that he went personally with a small retinue to their hotels. But he found their doors everywhere closed; and all his importunities could not avail to extort an answer. Sadly and slowly he returned to his own bedchamber; but there again he found fresh instances of desertion, which had occurred during his short absence; the pages of his bedchamber had fled, carrying with them the coverlids of the imperial bed, which were probably inwrought with gold, and even a golden box, in which Nero had on the preceding day deposited poison prepared against the last extremity. Wounded to the heart by this general desertion, and perhaps by some special case of ingratitude, such as would probably enough be signalized in the flight of his personal favorites, he called for a gladiator of the household to come and dispatch him. But none appearing — ‘What!’ said he, ‘have I neither friend nor foe?’ And so saying, he ran towards the Tiber, with the purpose of drowning himself. But that paroxysm, like all the rest, proved transient; and he expressed a wish for some hiding-place, or momentary asylum, in which he might collect his unsettled spirits, and fortify his wandering resolution. Such a retreat was offered him by his *libertus* Phaon, in his own rural villa, about four miles distant from Rome. The offer was accepted; and the emperor, without further pre-

paration than that of throwing over his person a short mantle of a dusky hue, and enveloping his head and face in a handkerchief, mounted his horse, and left Rome with four attendants. It was still night, but probably verging towards the early dawn; and even at that hour the imperial party met some travellers on their way to Rome (coming up no doubt,<sup>16</sup> on law business) — who said, as they passed, ‘These men are certainly in chase of Nero.’ Two other incidents, of an interesting nature, are recorded of this short but memorable ride: at one point of the road the shouts of the soldiery assailed their ears from the neighboring encampment of Galba. They were probably then getting under arms for their final march to take possession of the palace. At another point, an accident occurred of a more unfortunate kind, but so natural and so well circumstantiated, that it serves to verify the whole narrative; a dead body was lying on the road, at which the emperor’s horse started so violently as nearly to dismount his rider, and under the difficulty of the moment compelled him to withdraw the hand which held up the handkerchief, and suddenly to expose his features. Precisely at this critical moment it happened that an old half-pay officer passed, recognized the emperor, and saluted him. Perhaps it was with some purpose of applying a remedy to this unfortunate rencontre, that the party dismounted at a point where several roads met, and turned their horses adrift

to graze at will amongst the furze and brambles. Their own purpose was, to make their way to the back of the villa; but, to accomplish *that*, it was necessary that they should first cross a plantation of reeds, from the peculiar state of which they found themselves obliged to cover successively each space upon which they trode with parts of their dress, in order to gain any supportable footing. In this way, and contending with such hardships, they reached at length the postern side of the villa. Here we must suppose that there was no regular ingress; for, after waiting until an entrance was pierced, it seems that the emperor could avail himself of it in no more dignified posture, than by creeping through the hole on his hands and feet, (*quadrupes per angustias receptus.*)

Now, then, after such anxiety, alarm, and hardship, Nero had reached a quiet rural asylum. But for the unfortunate occurrence of his horse's alarm with the passing of the soldier, he might perhaps have counted on a respite of a day or two in this noiseless and obscure abode. But what a habitation for him who was yet ruler of the world in the eye of law, and even *de facto* was so, had any fatal accident befallen his aged competitor! The room in which (as the one most removed from notice and suspicion) he had secreted himself, was a cella, or little sleeping closet of a slave, furnished only with a miserable pallet and a coarse rug. Here lay the founder and possessor of

the Golden House, too happy if he might hope for the peaceable possession even of this miserable crypt. But that, he knew too well, was impossible. A rival pretender to the empire was like the plague of fire — as dangerous in the shape of a single spark left unextinguished, as in that of a prosperous conflagration. But a few brief sands yet remained to run in the emperor's hour-glass; much variety of degradation or suffering seemed scarcely within the possibilities of his situation, or within the compass of the time. Yet, as though Providence had decreed that his humiliation should pass through every shape, and speak by every expression which came home to his understanding, or was intelligible to his senses, even in these few moments he was attacked by hunger and thirst. No other bread could be obtained (or, perhaps, if the emperor's presence were concealed from the household, it was not safe to raise suspicion by calling for better) than that which was ordinarily given to slaves, coarse, black, and, to a palate so luxurious, doubtless disgusting. This accordingly he rejected; but a little tepid water he drank. After which, with the haste of one who fears that he may be prematurely interrupted, but otherwise, with all the reluctance which we may imagine, and which his streaming tears proclaimed, he addressed himself to the last labor in which he supposed himself to have any interest on this earth — that of digging a grave. Measuring a space adjusted to the proportions of his

person, he inquired anxiously for any loose fragments of marble, such as might suffice to line it. He requested also to be furnished with wood and water, as the materials for the last sepulchral rites. And these labors were accompanied, or continually interrupted by tears and lamentations, or by passionate ejaculations on the blindness of fortune, in suffering so divine an artist to be thus violently snatched away, and on the calamitous fate of musical science, which then stood on the brink of so dire an eclipse. In these moments he was most truly in an *agony*, according to the original meaning of that word; for the conflict was great between two master principles of his nature: on the one hand, he clung with the weakness of a girl to life, even in that miserable shape to which it had now sunk; and like the poor malefactor, with whose last struggles Prior has so atrociously amused himself, ‘he often took leave, but was loath to depart.’ Yet, on the other hand, to resign his life very speedily, seemed his only chance for escaping the contumelies, perhaps the tortures of his enemies; and, above all other considerations, for making sure of a burial, and possibly of burial rites; to want which, in the judgment of the ancients, was the last consummation of misery. Thus occupied, and thus distracted — sternly attracted to the grave by his creed, hideously repelled by infirmity of nature — he was suddenly interrupted by a courier with letters for the master of the house; letters, and



from Rome! What was their import? That was soon told—briefly that Nero was adjudged to be a public enemy by the senate, and that official orders were issued for apprehending him, in order that he might be brought to condign punishment according to the method of ancient precedent. Ancient precedent! *more majorem!* And how was that? eagerly demanded the emperor. He was answered—that the state criminal in such cases was first stripped naked, then impaled as it were between the prongs of a pitchfork, and in that condition scourged to death. Horror-struck with this account, he drew forth two poniards, or short swords, tried their edges, and then, in utter imbecility of purpose, returned them to their scabbards, alleging that the destined moment had not yet arrived. Then he called upon Sporus, the infamous partner in his former excesses, to commence the funeral anthem. Others, again, he besought to lead the way in dying, and to sustain him by the spectacle of their example. But this purpose also he dismissed in the very moment of utterance; and turning away despairingly, he apostrophized himself in words reproachful or animating, now taxing his nature with infirmity of purpose, now calling on himself by name, with adjurations to remember his dignity, and to act worthy of his supreme station: οὐ πρόκειται Νερώνι, cried he, οὐ πρόκειται· νύφειν δὲ ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις· ἄγε, ἔγειρε σεαυτὸν—i. e. ‘Fie, fie, then, Nero! such a season calls for perfect self-possession. Up, then, and rouse thyself to action.’

Thus, and in similar efforts to master the weakness of his reluctant nature — weakness which would ex-tort pity from the severest minds, were it not from the odious connection which in him it had with cruelty the most merciless — did this unhappy prince, *jam non salutis spem sed exitii solatium quærens*, consume the flying moments, until at length his ears caught the fatal sounds or echoes from a body of horsemen riding up to the villa. These were the officers charged with his arrest; and if he should fall into their hands alive, he knew that his last chance was over for liberating himself, by a Roman death, from the burthen of ignominious life, and from a lingering torture. He paused from his restless motions, listened attentively, then repeated a line from Homer —

‘*Ἰππων μὲν ὠκυπόδων ἀμφὶ πτερος ἑατα βαλλει*.’

(The resounding tread of swift-footed horses reverberates upon my ears); — then under some momentary impulse of courage, gained perhaps by figuring to himself the bloody populace rioting upon his mangled body, yet even then needing the auxiliary hand and vicarious courage of his private secretary, the feeble-hearted prince stabbed himself in the throat. The wound, however, was not such as to cause instant death. He was still breathing, and not quite speechless, when the centurion who commanded the party entered the closet; and to this officer who uttered a few hollow words of encouragement, he was still able

to make a brief reply. But in the very effort of speaking he expired, and with an expression of horror impressed upon his stiffened features, which communicated a sympathetic horror to all beholders.

Such was the too memorable tragedy which closed for ever the brilliant line of the Julian family, and translated the august title of Cæsar from its original purpose as a proper name to that of an official designation. It is the most striking instance upon record of a dramatic and extreme vengeance overtaking extreme guilt: for, as Nero had exhausted the utmost possibilities of crime, so it may be affirmed that he drank off the cup of suffering to the very extremity of what his peculiar nature allowed. And in no life of so short a duration, have there ever been crowded equal extremities of gorgeous prosperity and abject infamy. It may be added, as another striking illustration of the rapid mutability and revolutionary excesses which belonged to what has been properly called the Roman *stratocracy* then disposing of the world, that within no very great succession of weeks that same victorious rebel, the Emperor Galba, at whose feet Nero had been self-immolated, was laid a murdered corpse in the same identical cell which had witnessed the lingering agonies of his unhappy victim. This was the act of an emancipated slave, anxious, by a vindictive insult to the remains of one prince, to place on record his gratitude to another. ‘So runs the

world away!’ And in this striking way is retribution sometimes dispensed.

In the sixth Cæsar terminated the Julian line. The three next princes in the succession were personally uninteresting; and with a slight reserve in favor of Otho, whose motives for committing suicide (if truly reported) argue great nobility of mind,<sup>17</sup> were even brutal in the tenor of their lives and monstrous; besides that the extreme brevity of their several reigns (all three, taken conjunctly, having held the supreme power for no more than twelve months and twenty days) dismisses them from all effectual station or right to a separate notice in the line of Cæsars. Coming to the tenth in the succession, Vespasian, and his two sons, Titus and Domitian, who make up the list of the twelve Cæsars, as they are usually called, we find matter for deeper political meditation and subjects of curious research. But these emperors would be more properly classed with the five who succeeded them — Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines; after whom comes the young ruffian, Commodus, another Caligula or Nero, from whose short and infamous reign Gibbon takes up his tale of the decline of the empire. And this classification would probably have prevailed, had not the very curious work of Suetonius, whose own life and period of observation determined the series and cycle of his subjects, led to a different distribution. But as it is evident that, in the suc-

cession of the first twelve Cæsars, the six latter have no connection whatever by descent, collaterally, or otherwise, with the six first, it would be a more logical distribution to combine them according to the fortunes of the state itself, and the succession of its prosperity through the several stages of splendor, declension, revival, and final decay. Under this arrangement, the first seventeen would belong to the first stage; Commodus would open the second; Aurelian down to Constantine or Julian would fill the third; and Jovian to Augustulus would bring up the melancholy rear. Meantime it will be proper, after thus briefly throwing our eyes over the monstrous atrocities of the early Cæsars, to spend a few lines in examining their origin, and the circumstances which favored their growth. For a mere hunter after hidden or forgotten singularities; a lover on their own account of all strange perversities and freaks of nature, whether in action, taste, or opinion; for a collector and amateur of misgrowths and abortions; for a Suetonius, in short, it may be quite enough to state and to arrange his cabinet of specimens from the marvelous in human nature. But certainly in modern times, any historian, however little affecting the praise of a philosophic investigator, would feel himself called upon to remove a little the taint of the miraculous and preternatural which adheres to such anecdotes, by entering into the psychological grounds of their

possibility ; whether lying in any peculiarly vicious education, early familiarity with bad models, corrupting associations, or other plausible key to effects, which, taken separately, and out of their natural connection with their explanatory causes, are apt rather to startle and revolt the feelings of sober thinkers. Except, perhaps, in some chapters of Italian history, as, for example, among the most profligate of the Papal houses, and amongst some of the Florentine princes, we find hardly any parallel to the atrocities of Caligula and Nero ; nor indeed was Tiberius much (if at all) behind them, though otherwise so wary and cautious in his conduct. The same tenor of licentiousness beyond the needs of the individual, the same craving after the marvellous and the stupendous in guilt, is continually emerging in succeeding emperors — in Vitellius, in Domitian, in Commodus, in Caracalla — everywhere, in short, where it was not overruled by one of two causes, either by original goodness of nature too powerful to be mastered by ordinary seductions, (and in some cases removed from their influence by an early apprenticeship to camps,) or by the terrors of an exemplary ruin immediately preceding. For such a determinate tendency to the enormous and the anomalous, sufficient causes must exist. What were they ?

In the first place, we may observe that the people of Rome in that age were generally more corrupt by

many degrees than has been usually supposed possible. The effect of revolutionary times, to relax all modes of moral obligation, and to unsettle the moral sense, has been well and philosophically stated by Mr. Coleridge; but that would hardly account for the utter licentiousness and depravity of Imperial Rome. Looking back to Republican Rome, and considering the state of public morals but fifty years before the emperors, we can with difficulty believe that the descendants of a people so severe in their habits could thus rapidly degenerate, and that a populace, once so hardy and masculine, should assume the manners which we might expect in the debauchees of Daphne (the infamous suburb of Antioch) or of Canopus, into which settled the very lees and dregs of the vicious Alexandria. Such extreme changes would falsify all that we know of human nature; we might, *à priori*, pronounce them impossible; and in fact, upon searching history, we find other modes of solving the difficulty. In reality, the citizens of Rome were at this time a new race, brought together from every quarter of the world, but especially from Asia. So vast a proportion of the ancient citizens had been cut off by the sword, and partly to conceal this waste of population, but much more by way of cheaply requiting services, or of showing favor, or of acquiring influence, slaves had been emancipated in such great multitudes, and afterwards invested with all the rights of citizens,

that, in a single generation, Rome became almost transmuted into a baser metal; the progeny of those whom the last generation had purchased from the slave merchants. These people derived their stock chiefly from Cappadocia, Pontus, &c., and the other populous regions of Asia Minor; and hence the taint of Asiatic luxury and depravity, which was so conspicuous to all the Romans of the old republican severity. Juvenal is to be understood more literally than is sometimes supposed, when he complains that long before his time the Orontes (that river which washed the infamous capital of Syria) had mingled its impure waters with those of the Tiber. And a little before him, Lucan speaks with mere historic gravity when he says —

———— ‘ Vivant Galatæque Syrique  
Cappadoces, Gallique, extremique orbis Iberi,  
Armenii, Cilices : *nam post civilia bella*  
*Hic Populus Romanus erit.*’<sup>18</sup>

Probably in the time of Nero, not one man in six was of pure Roman descent.<sup>19</sup> And the consequences were suitable. Scarcely a family has come down to our knowledge that could not in one generation enumerate a long catalogue of divorces within its own contracted circle. Every man had married a series of wives; every woman a series of husbands. Even in the palace of Augustus, who wished to be viewed as an *exemplar* or ideal model of domestic purity,



every principal member of his family was tainted in that way ; himself in a manner and a degree infamous even at that time.<sup>20</sup> For the first 400 years of Rome, not one divorce had been granted or asked, although the statute which allowed of this indulgence had always been in force. But in the age succeeding to the civil wars, men and women ‘married,’ says one author, ‘with a view to divorce, and divorced in order to marry. Many of these changes happened within the year, especially if the lady had a large fortune, which always went with her and procured her choice of transient husbands.’ And, ‘can one imagine,’ asks the same writer, ‘that the fair one who changed her husband every quarter, strictly kept her matrimonial faith all the three months?’ Thus the very fountain of all the ‘household charities’ and household virtues was polluted. And after that we need little wonder at the assassinations, poisonings, and forging of wills, which then laid waste the domestic life of the Romans.

2. A second source of the universal depravity was the growing inefficacy of the public religion ; and this arose from its disproportion and inadequacy to the intellectual advances of the nation. *Religion*, in its very etymology, has been held to imply a *religatio*, that is, a reiterated or secondary obligation of morals ; a sanction supplementary to that of the conscience. Now, for a rude and uncultivated people, the Pagan

mythology might not be too gross to discharge the main functions of a useful religion. So long as the understanding could submit to the fables of the Pagan creed, so long it was possible that the hopes and fears built upon that creed might be practically efficient on men's lives and intentions. But when the foundation gave way, the whole superstructure of necessity fell to the ground. Those who were obliged to reject the ridiculous legends which invested the whole of their Pantheon, together with the fabulous adjudgers of future punishments, could not but dismiss the punishments, which were, in fact, as laughable, and as obviously the fictions of human ingenuity, as their dispensers. In short, the civilized part of the world in those days lay in this dreadful condition; their intellect had far outgrown their religion; the disproportions between the two were at length become monstrous; and as yet no purer or more elevated faith was prepared for their acceptance. The case was as shocking as if, with our present intellectual needs, we should be unhappy enough to have no creed on which to rest the burden of our final hopes and fears, of our moral obligations, and of our consolations in misery, except the fairy mythology of our nurses. The condition of a people so situated, of a people under the calamity of having outgrown its religious faith, has never been sufficiently considered. It is probable that such a condition has never existed before or since

that era of the world. The consequences to Rome were — that the reasoning and disputatious part of her population took refuge from the painful state of doubt in Atheism ; amongst the thoughtless and irreflective the consequences were chiefly felt in their morals, which were thus sapped in their foundation.

3. A third cause, which from the first had exercised a most baleful influence upon the arts and upon literature in Rome, had by this time matured its disastrous tendencies towards the extinction of the moral sensibilities. This was the circus, and the whole machinery, form and substance, of the Circensian shows. Why had tragedy no existence as a part of the Roman literature? Because — and *that* was a reason which would have sufficed to stifle all the dramatic genius of Greece and England — there was too much tragedy in the shape of gross reality, almost daily before their eyes. The amphitheatre extinguished the theatre. How was it possible that the fine and intellectual griefs of the drama should win their way to hearts seared and rendered callous by the continual exhibition of scenes the most hideous, in which human blood was poured out like water, and a human life sacrificed at any moment either to caprice in the populace, or to a strife of rivalry between the *ayes* and the *noes*, or as the penalty for any trifling instance of awkwardness in the performer himself? Even the more innocent exhibitions, in which brutes only were

the sufferers, could not but be mortal to all the finer sensibilities. Five thousand wild animals, torn from their native abodes in the wilderness or forest, were often turned out to be hunted, or for mutual slaughter, in the course of a single exhibition of this nature; and it sometimes happened, (a fact which of itself proclaims the course of the public propensities,) that the person at whose expense the shows were exhibited, by way of paying special court to the people and meriting their favor, in the way most conspicuously open to him, issued orders that all, without a solitary exception, should be slaughtered. He made it known, as the very highest gratification which the case allowed, that (in the language of our modern auctioneers) the whole, 'without reserve,' should perish before their eyes. Even such spectacles must have hardened the heart and blunted the more delicate sensibilities; but these would soon cease to stimulate the pampered and exhausted sense. From the combats of tigers or leopards, in which the passions could only be gathered indirectly, and by way of inference from the motions, the transition must have been almost inevitable to those of men, whose nobler and more varied passions spoke directly, and by the intelligible language of the eye, to human spectators; and from the frequent contemplation of these authorized murders, in which a whole people, women <sup>21</sup> as much as men, and children intermingled with both, looked on with leisurely indif-

ference, with anxious expectation, or with rapturous delight, whilst below them were passing the direct sufferings of humanity, and not seldom its dying pangs, it was impossible to expect a result different from that which did in fact take place, — universal hardness of heart, obdurate depravity, and a twofold degradation of human nature, which acted simultaneously upon the two pillars of morality, (which are otherwise not often assailed together,) of natural sensibility in the first place, and in the second, of conscientious principle.

4. But these were circumstances which applied to the whole population indiscriminately. Superadded to these, in the case of the emperor, and affecting *him* exclusively, was this prodigious disadvantage — that ancient reverence for the immediate witnesses of his actions, and for the people and senate who would under other circumstances have exercised the old functions of the censor, was, as to the emperor, pretty nearly obliterated. The very title of *imperator*, from which we have derived our modern one of *emperor*, proclaims the nature of the government, and the tenure of that office. It was purely a government by the sword, or permanent *stratocracy*, having a movable head. Never was there a people who inquired so impertinently as the Romans into the domestic conduct of each private citizen. No rank escaped this jealous vigilance ; and private liberty, even in the

most indifferent circumstances of taste or expense, was sacrificed to this inquisitorial rigor of *surveillance*, exercised on behalf of the state, sometimes by erroneous patriotism, too often by malice in disguise. To this spirit the highest public officers were obliged to bow; the consuls, not less than others. And even the occasional dictator, if by law irresponsible, acted nevertheless as one who knew that any change which depressed his party might eventually abrogate his privilege. For the first time in the person of an imperator was seen a supreme autocrat, who had virtually and effectively all the irresponsibility which the law assigned, and the origin of his office presumed. Satisfied to know that he possessed such power, Augustus, as much from natural taste as policy, was glad to dissemble it, and by every means to withdraw it from public notice. But he had passed his youth as citizen of a republic; and in the state of transition to autocracy, in his office of triumvir, had experimentally known the perils of rivalry, and the pains of foreign control, too feelingly to provoke unnecessarily any sleeping embers of the republican spirit. Tiberius, though familiar from his infancy with the servile homage of a court, was yet modified by the popular temper of Augustus; and he came late to the throne. Caligula was the first prince on whom the entire effect of his political situation was allowed to operate; and the natural results were seen — he was the first abso-

lute monster. He must early have seen the realities of his position, and from what quarter it was that any cloud could arise to menace his security. To the senate or people any respect which he might think proper to pay, must have been imputed by all parties to the lingering superstitions of custom, to involuntary habit, to court dissimulation, or to the decencies of external form, and the prescriptive reverence of ancient names. But neither senate nor people could enforce their claims, whatever they might happen to be. Their sanction and ratifying vote might be worth having, as consecrating what was already secure, and conciliating the scruples of the weak to the absolute decision of the strong. But their resistance, as an original movement, was so wholly without hope, that they were never weak enough to threaten it.

The army was the true successor to their places, being the *ultimate* depository of power. Yet, as the army was necessarily subdivided, as the shifting circumstances upon every frontier were continually varying the strength of the several divisions as to numbers and state of discipline, one part might be balanced against the other by an imperator standing in the centre of the whole. The rigor of the military *sacramentum*, or oath of allegiance, made it dangerous to offer the first overtures to rebellion ; and the money, which the soldiers were continually depositing in the bank, placed at the foot of their military standards, if

sometimes turned against the emperor, was also liable to be sequestered in his favor. There were then, in fact, two great forces in the government acting in and by each other — the Stratocracy, and the Autocracy. Each needed the other; each stood in awe of each. But, as regarded all other forces in the empire, constitutional or irregular, popular or senatorial, neither had anything to fear. Under any ordinary circumstances, therefore, considering the hazards of a rebellion, the emperor was substantially liberated from all control. Vexations or outrages upon the populace were not such to the army. It was but rarely that the soldier participated in the emotions of the citizen. And thus, being effectually without check, the most vicious of the Cæsars went on without fear, presuming upon the weakness of one part of his subjects, and the indifference of the other, until he was tempted onwards to atrocities, which armed against him the common feelings of human nature, and all mankind, as it were, rose in a body with one voice, and apparently with one heart, united by mere force of indignant sympathy, to put him down, and ‘abate’ him as a monster. But, until he brought matters to this extremity, Cæsar had no cause to fear. Nor was it at all certain, in any one instance, where this exemplary chastisement overtook him, that the apparent unanimity of the actors went further than the *practical* conclusion of ‘abating’



the imperial nuisance, or that their indignation had settled upon the same offences. In general, the army measured the guilt by the public scandal, rather than by its moral atrocity ; and Cæsar suffered perhaps in every case, not so much because he had violated his duties, as because he had dishonored his office.

It is, therefore, in the total absence of the checks which have almost universally existed to control other despots, under some indirect shape, even where none was provided by the laws, that we must seek for the main peculiarity affecting the condition of the Roman Cæsar, which peculiarity it was, superadded to the other three, that finally made those three operative in their fullest extent. It is in the perfection of the stratocracy that we must look for the key to the excesses of the autocrat. Even in the bloody despotisms of the Barbary States, there has always existed in the religious prejudices of the people, which could not be violated with safety, one check more upon the caprices of the despot than was found at Rome. Upon the whole, therefore, what affects us on the first reading as a prodigy or anomaly in the frantic outrages of the early Cæsars — falls within the natural bounds of intelligible human nature, when we state the case considerately. Surrounded by a population which had not only gone through a most vicious and corrupting discipline, and had been utterly ruined by the license of revolutionary times, and the

bloodiest proscriptions, but had even been extensively changed in its very elements, and from the descendants of Romulus had been transmuted into an Asiatic mob:—starting from this point, and considering as the second feature of the case, that this transfigured people, *morally* so degenerate, were carried, however, by the progress of civilization, to a certain intellectual altitude, which the popular religion had not strength to ascend—but from inherent disproportion remained at the base of the general civilization, incapable of accompanying the other elements in their advance;—thirdly, that this polished condition of society, which should naturally with the evils of a luxurious repose have counted upon its pacific benefits, had yet, by means of its circus and its gladiatorial contests, applied a constant irritation, and a system of provocations to the appetites for blood, such as in all other nations are connected with the rudest stages of society, and with the most barbarous modes of warfare, nor even in such circumstances, without many palliatives wanting to the spectators of the circus;—combining these considerations, we have already a key to the enormities and hideous excesses of the Roman Emperor. The hot blood which excites, and the adventurous courage which accompanies, the excesses of sanguinary warfare, presuppose a condition of the moral nature not to be compared for malignity and baleful tendency to the cool and cowardly spirit of amateurship, in which the

Roman (perhaps an effeminate Asiatic) sat looking down upon the bravest of men, (Thracians or other Europeans,) mangling each other for his recreation. When, lastly, from such a population, and thus disciplined from his nursery days, we suppose the case of one individual selected, privileged, and raised to a conscious irresponsibility, except at the bar of one extra-judicial tribunal, not easily irritated, and notoriously to be propitiated by other means than those of upright or impartial conduct, we lay together the elements of a situation too trying for poor human nature, and fitted only to the faculties of an angel or a demon; of an angel, if we suppose him to resist its full temptations; of a demon, if we suppose him to use its total opportunities. Thus interpreted and solved, Caligula and Nero become ordinary men.

But, finally, what if, after all, the worst of the Cæsars, and those in particular, were entitled to the benefit of a still shorter and more conclusive apology? What if, in a true medical sense, they were insane? It is certain that a vein of madness ran in the family; and anecdotes are recorded of the three worst, which go far to establish it as a fact, and others which would imply it as symptoms—preceding or accompanying. As belonging to the former class, take the following story: At midnight an elderly gentleman suddenly sends round a message to a select party of noblemen, rouses them out of bed, and summons them instantly

to his palace. Trembling for their lives from the suddenness of the summons, and from the unseasonable hour, and scarcely doubting that by some anonymous *delator* they have been implicated as parties to a conspiracy, they hurry to the palace—are received in portentous silence by the ushers and pages in attendance—are conducted to a saloon, where (as in everywhere else) the silence of night prevails, united with the silence of fear and whispering expectation. All are seated—all look at each other in ominous anxiety. Which is accuser? Which is the accused? On whom shall their suspicions settle—on whom their pity? All are silent—almost speechless—and even the current of their thoughts is frost-bound by fear. Suddenly the sound of a fiddle or a viol is caught from a distance—it swells upon the ear—steps approach—and in another moment in rushes the elderly gentleman, grave and gloomy as his audience, but capering about in a frenzy of excitement. For half an hour he continues to perform all possible evolutions of caprioles, pirouettes, and other extravagant feats of activity, accompanying himself on the fiddle; and, at length, not having once looked at his guests, the elderly gentleman whirls out of the room in the same transport of emotion with which he entered it; the panic-struck visitors are requested by a slave to consider themselves as dismissed: they retire; resume their couches:—

the nocturnal pageant has 'dislimned' and vanished; and on the following morning, were it not for their concurring testimonies, all would be disposed to take this interruption of their sleep for one of its most fantastic dreams. The elderly gentleman who figured in this delirious *pas seul* — who was he? He was Tiberius Cæsar, king of kings, and lord of the terraqueous globe. Would a British jury demand better evidence than this of a disturbed intellect in any formal process *de lunatico inquirendo*? For Caligula, again, the evidence of symptoms is still plainer. He knew his own defect; and proposed going through a course of hellebore. Sleeplessness, one of the commonest indications of lunacy, haunted him in an excess rarely recorded.<sup>22</sup> The same, or similar facts, might be brought forward on behalf of Nero. And thus these unfortunate princes, who have so long (and with so little investigation of their cases) passed for monsters or for demoniac counterfeits of men, would at length be brought back within the fold of humanity, as objects rather of pity than of abhorrence, would be reconciled to our indulgent feelings, and, at the same time, made intelligible to our understandings.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE five Cæsars who succeeded immediately to the first twelve, were, in as high a sense as their office allowed, patriots. Hadrian is perhaps the first of all whom circumstances permitted to show his patriotism without fear. It illustrates at one and the same moment a trait in this emperor's character, and in the Roman habits, that he acquired much reputation for hardness by walking bareheaded. 'Never, on any occasion,' says one of his memorialists (Dio), 'neither in summer heat nor in winter's cold, did he cover his head; but, as well in the Celtic snows as in Egyptian heats, he went about bareheaded.' This anecdote could not fail to win the especial admiration of Isaac Casaubon, who lived in an age when men believed a hat no less indispensable to the head, even within doors, than shoes or stockings to the feet. His astonishment on the occasion is thus expressed: '*Tantum est ἡ ἄσκησις* : ' such and so mighty is the force of habit and daily use. And then he goes on to ask — '*Quis hodie nudum caput radiis solis, aut omnia perurenti frigori, ausit exponere?*' Yet we ourselves and our illustrious friend, Christopher North, have walked for twenty years amongst our British lakes and mountains

hatless, and amidst both snow and rain, such as Romans did not often experience. We were naked, and yet not ashamed. Nor in this are we altogether singular. But, says Casaubon, the Romans went farther; for they walked about the streets of Rome<sup>23</sup> bare-headed, and never assumed a hat or a cap, a *petasus* or a *galerus*, a Macedonian *causia*, or a *pileus*, whether Thessalian, Arcadian or Laconic, unless when they entered upon a journey. Nay, some there were, as Masinissa and Julius Cæsar, who declined even on such an occasion to cover their heads. Perhaps in imitation of these celebrated leaders, Hadrian adopted the same practice, but not with the same result; for to him, either from age or constitution, this very custom proved the original occasion of his last illness.

Imitation, indeed, was a general principle of action with Hadrian, and the key to much of his public conduct; and allowably enough, considering the exemplary lives (in a public sense) of some who had preceded him, and the singular anxiety with which he distinguished between the lights and shadows of their examples. He imitated the great Dictator, Julius, in his vigilance of inspection into the civil, not less than the martial police of his times, shaping his new regulations to meet abuses as they arose, and strenuously maintaining the old ones in vigorous operation. As respected the army, this was matter of peculiar praise, because peculiarly disinterested; for his foreign policy

was pacific ;<sup>24</sup> he made no new conquests : and he retired from the old ones of Trojan, where they could not have been maintained without disproportionate bloodshed, or a jealousy beyond the value of the stake. In this point of his administration he took Augustus for his model ; as again in his care of the army, in his occasional bounties, and in his paternal solicitude for their comforts, he looked rather to the example of Julius. Him also he imitated in his affability and in his ambitious courtesies ; one instance of which, as blending an artifice of political subtlety and simulation with a remarkable exertion of memory, it may be well to mention. The custom was, in canvassing the citizens of Rome, that the candidate should address every voter by his name ; it was a fiction of republican etiquette, that every man participating in the political privileges of the State must be personally known to public aspirants. But, as this was supposed to be, in a literal sense, impossible to all men with the ordinary endowments of memory, in order to reconcile the pretensions of republican hauteur with the necessities of human weakness, a custom had grown up of relying upon a class of men called *nomenclators*, whose express business and profession it was to make themselves acquainted with the person and name of every citizen. One of these people accompanied every candidate, and quietly whispered into his ear the name of each voter as he came in sight. Few, indeed, were they who



could dispense with the services of such an assessor; for the office imposed a twofold memory, that of names and of persons; and to estimate the immensity of the effort, we must recollect that the number of voters often far exceed one quarter of a million. The very same trial of memory he undertook with respect to his own army, in this instance recalling the well known feat of Mithridates. And throughout his life he did not once forget the face or name of any veteran soldier whom he had ever occasion to notice, no matter under what remote climate, or under what difference of circumstances. Wonderful is the effect upon soldiers of such enduring and separate remembrance, which operates always as the most touching kind of personal flattery, and which, in every age of the world, since the social sensibilities of men have been much developed, military commanders are found to have played upon as the most effectual chord in the great system which they modulated; some few, by a rare endowment of nature; others, as Napoleon Bonaparte, by elaborate mimeries of pantomimic art.<sup>25</sup>

Other modes he had of winning affection from the army; in particular that, so often practised before and since, of accommodating himself to the strictest ritual of martial discipline and castrensian life. He slept in the open air, or, if he used a tent (*papilio*), it was open at the sides. He ate the ordinary rations of cheese, bacon, &c.; he used no other drink than that

composition of vinegar and water, known by the name of *posca*, which formed the sole beverage allowed in the Roman camps. He joined personally in the periodical exercises of the army — those even which were trying to the most vigorous youth and health : marching, for example, on stated occasions, twenty English miles without intermission, in full armor and completely accoutred. Luxury of every kind he not only interdicted to the soldier by severe ordinances, himself enforcing their execution, but discountenanced it (though elsewhere splendid and even gorgeous in his personal habits) by his own continual example. In dress, for instance, he sternly banished the purple and gold embroideries, the jewelled arms, and the floating draperies, so little in accordance with the severe character of '*war in procinct.*'<sup>26</sup> Hardly would he allow himself an ivory hilt to his sabre. The same severe proscription he extended to every sort of furniture, or decorations of art, which sheltered even in the bosom of camps those habits of effeminate luxury — so apt in all great empires to steal by imperceptible steps from the voluptuous palace to the soldier's tent — following in the equipage of great leading officers, or of subalterns highly connected. There was at that time a practice prevailing, in the great standing camps on the several frontiers and at all the military stations, of renewing as much as possible the image of distant Rome by the erection of long colonnades and piazzas —

single, double, or triple; of crypts, or subterranean<sup>27</sup> saloons, (and sometimes subterranean galleries and corridors,) for evading the sultry noontides of July and August; of verdant cloisters or arcades, with roofs high over-arched, constructed entirely out of flexile shrubs, box-myrtle, and others, trained and trimmed in regular forms; besides endless other applications of the *topiary*<sup>28</sup> art, which in those days (like the needlework of Miss Linwood in ours), though no more than a mechanic craft, in some measure realized the effects of a fine art by the perfect skill of its execution. All these modes of luxury, with a policy that had the more merit as it thwarted his own private inclinations, did Hadrian peremptorily abolish; perhaps amongst other more obvious purposes, seeking to intercept the earliest buddings of those local attachments which are as injurious to the martial character and the proper pursuits of men whose vocation obliges them to consider themselves eternally under marching orders, as they are propitious to all the best interests of society in connection with the feelings of civic life.

We dwell upon this prince not without reason in this particular; for, amongst the Cæsars, Hadrian stands forward in high relief as a reformer of the army. Well and truly might it be said of him — that, *post Cæsarem Octavianum labantem disciplinam, incurid superiorum principum, ipse retinuit*. Not content with the cleansing and purgations we have mentioned,

he placed upon a new footing the whole tenure, duties, and pledges of military offices.<sup>29</sup> It cannot much surprise us that this department of the public service should gradually have gone to ruin or decay. Under the senate and people, under the auspices of those awful symbols — letters more significant and ominous than ever before had troubled the eyes of man, except upon Belshazzar's wall — S. P. Q. R., the officers of the Roman army had been kept true to their duties, and vigilant by emulation and a healthy ambition. But, when the ripeness of corruption had by dissolving the body of the State brought out of its ashes a new mode of life, and had recast the aristocratic republic, by aid of its democratic elements then suddenly victorious, into a pure autocracy — whatever might be the advantages in other respects of this great change, in one point it had certainly injured the public service, by throwing the higher military appointments, all in fact which conferred any authority, into the channels of court favor — and by consequence into a mercenary disposal. Each successive emperor had been too anxious for his own immediate security, to find leisure for the remoter interests of the empire : all looked to the army, as it were, for their own immediate security against competitors, without venturing to tamper with its constitution, to risk popularity by reforming abuses, to balance present interest against a remote one, or to cultivate the public welfare at the hazard of their own :

contented with obtaining *that*, they left the internal arrangements of so formidable a body in the state to which circumstances had brought it, and to which naturally the views of all existing beneficiaries had gradually adjusted themselves. What these might be, and to what further results they might tend, was a matter of moment doubtless to the empire. But the empire was strong ; if its motive energy was decaying, its *vis inertię* was for ages enormous, and could stand up against assaults repeated for many ages : whilst the emperor was in the beginning of his authority weak, and pledged by instant interest, no less than by express promises, to the support of that body whose favor had substantially supported himself. Hadrian was the first who turned his attention effectually in that direction ; whether it were that he first was struck with the tendency of the abuses, or that he valued the hazard less which he incurred in correcting them, or that having no successor of his own blood, he had a less personal and affecting interest at stake in setting this hazard at defiance. Hitherto, the highest regimental rank, that of tribune, had been disposed of in two ways, either civilly upon popular favor and election, or upon the express recommendation of the soldiery. This custom had prevailed under the republic, and the force of habit had availed to propagate that practice under a new mode of government. But now were introduced new regulations : the tribune was selected for his mili-

tary qualities and experience : none was appointed to this important office, '*nisi barbâ plenâ*.' The centurion's truncheon,<sup>30</sup> again, was given to no man, '*nisi robusto et bonæ famæ*.' The arms and military appointments (*supellectilis*) were revised ; the register of names was duly called over ; and none suffered to remain in the camps who was either above or below the military age. The same vigilance and jealousy were extended to the great stationary stores and repositories of biscuit, vinegar, and other equipments for the soldiery. All things were in constant readiness in the capital and the provinces, in the garrisons and camps, abroad and at home, to meet the outbreak of a foreign war or a domestic sedition. Whatever were the service, it could by no possibility find Hadrian unprepared. And he first, in fact, of all the Cæsars, restored to its ancient republican standard, as reformed and perfected by Narius, the old martial discipline of the Scipios and the Paulli — that discipline, to which, more than to any physical superiority of her soldiery, Rome had been indebted for her conquest of the earth ; and which had inevitably decayed in the long series of wars growing out of personal ambition. From the days of Marius, every great leader had sacrificed to the necessities of courting favor from the troops, as much as was possible of the hardships incident to actual service, and as much as he dared of the once rigorous discipline. Hadrian first found himself in circumstances, or was the first

who had courage enough to decline a momentary interest in favor of a greater in reversion ; and a personal object which was transient, in favor of a State one continually revolving.

For a prince, with no children of his own, it is in any case a task of peculiar delicacy to select a successor. In the Roman empire the difficulties were much aggravated. The interests of the State were, in the first place, to be consulted ; for a mighty burthen of responsibility rested upon the emperor in the most personal sense. Duties of every kind fell to his station, which, from the peculiar constitution of the government, and from circumstances rooted in the very origin of the imperial office, could not be devolved upon a council. Council there was none, nor could be recognized as such in the State machinery. The emperor, himself a sacred and sequestered creature, might be supposed to enjoy the secret tutelage of the Supreme Deity ; but a council, composed of subordinate and responsible agents, could *not*. Again, the auspices of the emperor, and his edicts, apart even from any celestial or supernatural inspiration, simply as emanations of his own divine character, had a value and a consecration which could never belong to those of a council — or to those even which had been sullied by the breath of any less august reviser. The emperor, therefore, or — as with a view to his solitary and unique character we ought to call him — in the original

irrepresentable term, the imperator, could not delegate his duties, or execute them in any avowed form by proxies or representatives. He was himself the great fountain of law — of honor — of preferment — of civil and political regulations. He was the fountain also of good and evil fame. He was the great chancellor, or supreme dispenser of equity to all climates, nations, languages, of his mighty dominions, which connected the turbaned races of the Orient, and those who sat in the gates of the rising sun, with the islands of the West, and the unfathomed depths of the mysterious Scandinavia. He was the universal guardian of the public and private interests which composed the great edifice of the social system as then existing amongst his subjects. Above all, and out of his own private purse, he supported the heraldries of his dominions — the peerage, senatorial or prætorian, and the great gentry or chivalry of the Equites. These were classes who would have been dishonored by the censorship of a less august comptroller. And for the classes below these, — by how much they were lower and more remote from his ocular superintendence, — by so much the more were they linked to him in a connection of absolute dependence. Cæsar it was who provided their daily food, Cæsar who provided their pleasures and relaxations. He chartered the fleets which brought grain to the Tiber — he bespoke the Sardinian granaries while yet unformed — and the



harvests of the Nile while yet unsown. Not the connection between a mother and her unborn infant is more intimate and vital, than that which subsisted between the mighty populace of the Roman capitol and their paternal emperor. They drew their nutriment from him ; they lived and were happy by sympathy with the motions of his will ; to him also the arts, the knowledge, and the literature of the empire looked for support. To him the armies looked for their laurels, and the eagles in every clime turned their aspiring eyes, waiting to bend their flight according to the signal of his Jovian nod. And all these vast functions and ministrations arose partly as a natural effect, but partly also they were a cause of the emperor's own divinity. He was capable of services so exalted, because he also was held a god, and had his own altars, his own incense, his own worship and priests. And that was the cause, and that was the result of his bearing, on his own shoulders, a burthen so mighty and Atlantean.

Yet, if in this view it was needful to have a man of talent, on the other hand there was reason to dread a man of talents too adventurous, too aspiring, or too intriguing. His situation, as Cæsar, or Crown Prince, flung into his hands a power of fomenting conspiracies, and of concealing them until the very moment of explosion, which made him an object of almost exclusive terror to his principal, the Cæsar

Augustus. His situation again, as an heir voluntarily adopted, made him the proper object of public affection and caresses, which became peculiarly embarrassing to one who had, perhaps, soon found reasons for suspecting, fearing, and hating him beyond all other men.

The young nobleman, whom Hadrian adopted by his earliest choice, was Lucius Aurelius Verus, the son of Cejonius Commodus. These names were borne also by the son ; but, after his adoption into the Ælian family, he was generally known by the appellation of Ælius Verus. The scandal of those times imputed his adoption to the worst motives. ‘*Adriano,*’ says one author, ‘*(ut malevoli loquuntur) acceptior formâ quam moribus.*’ And thus much undoubtedly there is to countenance so shocking an insinuation, that very little is recorded of the young prince but such anecdotes as illustrate his excessive luxury and effeminate dedication to pleasure. Still it is our private opinion, that Hadrian’s real motives have been misrepresented ; that he sought in the young man’s extraordinary beauty — [for he was, says Spartian, *pulchritudinis regiæ*] — a plausible pretext that should be sufficient to explain and to countenance his preference, whilst under his provisional adoption he was enabled to postpone the definitive choice of an emperor elect, until his own more advanced age might diminish the motives for intriguing against himself. It was, therefore, a mere *ad interim* adoption ; for it is certain, however we

may choose to explain that fact, that Hadrian foresaw and calculated on the early death of Ælius. This prophetic knowledge may have been grounded on a private familiarity with some constitutional infirmity affecting his daily health, or with some habits of life incompatible with longevity, or with both combined. It is pretended that this distinguished mark of favor was conferred in fulfilment of a direct contract on the emperor's part, as the price of favors, such as the Latin reader will easily understand from the strong expression of Spartian above cited. But it is far more probable that Hadrian relied on this admirable beauty, and allowed it so much weight, as the readiest and most intelligible justification to the multitude, of a choice which thus offered to their homage a public favorite — and to the nobility, of so invidious a preference, which placed one of their own number far above the level of his natural rivals. The necessities of the moment were thus satisfied without present or future danger; — as respected the future, he knew or believed that Verus was marked out for early death; and would often say, in a strain of compliment somewhat disproportionate, applying to him the Virgilian lines on the hopeful and lamented Marcellus,

‘Ostendent terris hunc tantum fata, neque ultra  
Esse sinent.’

And, at the same time, to countenance the belief that he had been disappointed, he would affect to sigh,

exclaiming — ‘ Ah ! that I should thus fruitlessly have squandered a sum of three<sup>31</sup> millions sterling ! ’ for so much had been distributed in largesses to the people and the army on the occasion of his inauguration. Meantime, as respected the present, the qualities of the young man were amply fitted to sustain a Roman popularity ; for, in addition to his extreme and statuesque beauty of person, he was (in the report of one who did not wish to color his character advantageously) ‘ *memor familiæ suæ, comptus, decorus, oris venerandi, eloquentiæ celsioris, versu facilis, in republicâ etiam non inutilis.* ’ Even as a military officer, he had a respectable<sup>32</sup> character ; as an orator he was more than respectable ; and in other qualifications less interesting to the populace, he had that happy mediocrity of merit which was best fitted for his delicate and difficult situation — sufficient to do credit to the emperor’s preference — sufficient to sustain the popular regard, but not brilliant enough to throw his patron into the shade. For the rest his vices were of a nature not greatly or necessarily to interfere with his public duties, and emphatically such as met with the readiest indulgence from the Roman laxity of morals. Some few instances, indeed, are noticed of cruelty ; but there is reason to think that it was merely by accident, and as an indirect result of other purposes, that he ever allowed himself in such manifestations of irresponsible power — not as gratifying any harsh impulses of his

native character. The most remarkable neglect of humanity with which he has been taxed, occurred in the treatment of his couriers; these were the bearers of news and official dispatches, at that time fulfilling the functions of the modern post; and it must be remembered that as yet they were not slaves, (as afterwards by the reformation of Alexander Severus,) but free citizens. They had been already dressed in a particular livery or uniform, and possibly they might wear some symbolical badges of their profession; but the new Cæsar chose to dress them altogether in character as winged Cupids, affixing literal wings to their shoulders, and facetiously distinguishing them by the names of the four cardinal winds, (Boreas, Aquilo, Notus, &c.) and others as levanters or hurricanes, (Circius, &c.) Thus far he did no more than indulge a blameless fancy; but in his anxiety that his runners should emulate their patron winds, and do credit to the names which he had assigned them, he is said to have exacted a degree of speed inconsistent with any merciful regard for their bodily powers.<sup>33</sup> But these were, after all, perhaps, mere improvements of malice upon some solitary incident. The true stain upon his memory, and one which is open to no doubt whatever, is excessive and extravagant luxury — excessive in degree, extravagant and even ludicrous in its forms. For example, he constructed a sort of bed or sofa — protected from insects by an awning of net-

work composed of lilies, delicately fabricated into the proper meshes, &c., and the couches composed wholly of rose-leaves; and even of these, not without an exquisite preparation; for the white parts of the leaves, as coarser and harsher to the touch, (possibly, also, as less odorous,) were scrupulously rejected. Here he lay indolently stretched amongst favorite ladies,

‘And like a naked Indian slept himself away.’

He had also tables composed of the same delicate material — prepared and purified in the same elaborate way — and to these were adapted seats in the fashion of sofas (*accubationes*), corresponding in their materials, and in their mode of preparation. He was also an expert performer, and even an original inventor, in the art of cookery; and one dish of his discovery, which, from its four component parts, obtained the name of *tetrapharmacum*, was so far from owing its celebrity to its royal birth, that it maintained its place on Hadrian’s table to the time of his death. These, however, were mere fopperies or pardonable extravagances in one so young and so exalted; ‘quæ, etsi non decora,’ as the historian observes, ‘non tamen ad perniciem publicam prompta sunt.’ A graver mode of licentiousness appeared in his connections with women. He made no secret of his lawless amours; and to his own wife, on her expostulating with him on his aberrations in this respect, he replied — that ‘*wife*’ was a designation of rank and official dignity, not of

tenderness and affection, or implying any claim of love on either side; upon which distinction he begged that she would mind her own affairs, and leave him to pursue such as he might himself be involved in by his sensibility to female charms.

However, he and all his errors, his 'regal beauty,' his princely pomps, and his authorized hopes, were suddenly swallowed up by the inexorable grave; and he would have passed away like an exhalation, and leaving no remembrance of himself more durable than his own beds of rose-leaves, and his reticulated canopies of lilies, had it not been that Hadrian filled the world with images of his perfect fawn-like beauty in the shape of colossal statues, and raised temples even to his memory in various cities. This Cæsar, therefore, dying thus prematurely, never tasted of empire; and his name would have had but a doubtful title to a place in the imperial roll, had it not been recalled to a second chance for the sacred honors in the person of his son — whom it was the pleasure of Hadrian, by way of testifying his affection for the father, to associate in the order of succession with the philosophic Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. This fact, and the certainty that to the second Ælius Verus he gave his own daughter in marriage, rather than to his associate Cæsar Marcus Aurelius, make it evident that his regret for the elder Verus was unaffected and deep; and they overthrow effectually the common report of historians — that he

repented of his earliest choice, as of one that had been disappointed not by the decrees of fate, but by the violent defect of merit in its object. On the contrary, he prefaced his inauguration of this junior Cæsar by the following tender words — Let us confound the rapine of the grave, and let the empire possess amongst her rulers a second Ælius Verus.

‘ *Diis aliter visum est :* ’ the blood of the Ælian family was not privileged to ascend or aspire : it gravitated violently to extinction ; and this junior Verus is supposed to have been as much indebted to his assessor on the throne for shielding his obscure vices, and drawing over his defects the ample draperies of the imperatorial robe, as he was to Hadrian, his grandfather by fiction of law, for his adoption into the reigning family, and his consecration as one of the Cæsars. He, says one historian, shed no ray of light or illustration upon the imperial house, except by one solitary quality. This bears a harsh sound ; but it has the effect of a sudden redemption for his memory, when we learn — that this solitary quality, in virtue of which he claimed a natural affinity to the sacred house, and challenged a natural interest in the purple, was the very princely one of — a merciful disposition.

The two Antonines fix an era in the imperial history ; for they were both eminent models of wise and good rulers ; and some would say, that they fixed a crisis ; for with their successor commenced, in the popular



belief, the decline of the empire. That at least is the doctrine of Gibbon ; but perhaps it would not be found altogether able to sustain itself against a closer and philosophic examination of the true elements involved in the idea of declension as applied to political bodies. Be that as it may, however, and waiving any interest which might happen to invest the Antonines as the last princes who kept up the empire to its original level, both of them had enough of merit to challenge a separate notice in their personal characters, and apart from the accidents of their position.

The elder of the two, who is usually distinguished by the title of *Pius*, is thus described by one of his biographers : — ‘ He was externally of remarkable beauty ; eminent for his moral character, full of benign dispositions, noble, with a countenance of a most gentle expression, intellectually of singular endowments, possessing an elegant style of eloquence, distinguished for his literature, generally temperate, an earnest lover of agricultural pursuits, mild in his deportment, bountiful in the use of his own, but a stern respecter of the rights of others ; and, finally, he was all this without ostentation, and with a constant regard to the proportions of cases, and to the demands of time and place.’ His bounty displayed itself in a way, which may be worth mentioning, as at once illustrating the age, and the prudence with which he controlled the most generous of his impulses : — ‘ *Fœnus trientarium*,’ says the

historian, ‘*hoc est minimis usuris exercuit, ut patrimonio suo plurimos adjuaret.*’ The meaning of which is this: — In Rome, the customary interest for money was what was called *centesima usuræ*; that is, the hundredth part, or one per cent. But, as this expressed not the annual, but the *monthly* interest, the true rate was, in fact, twelve per cent.; and that is the meaning of *centesima usuræ*. Nor could money be obtained anywhere on better terms than these; and, moreover, this one per cent. was exacted rigorously as the monthly day came round, no arrears being suffered to lie over. Under these circumstances, it was a prodigious service to lend money at a diminished rate, and one which furnished many men with the means of saving themselves from ruin. Pius, then, by way of extending his aid as far as possible, reduced the monthly rate of his loans to one-third per cent., which made the annual interest the very moderate one of four per cent. The channels, which public spirit had as yet opened to the beneficence of the opulent, were few indeed: charity and munificence languished, or they were abused, or they were inefficiently directed, simply through defects in the structure of society. Social organization, for its large development, demanded the agency of newspapers, (together with many other forms of assistance from the press,) of banks, of public carriages on an extensive scale, besides infinite other inventions or establishments not yet created — which

support and powerfully re-act upon that same progress of society which originally gave birth to themselves. All things considered, in the Rome of that day, where all munificence confined itself to the direct largesses of a few leading necessities of life, — a great step was taken, and the best step, in this lending of money at a low interest, towards a more refined and beneficial mode of charity.

In his public character, he was perhaps the most patriotic of Roman emperors, and the purest from all taint of corrupt or indirect ends. Peculation, embezzlement or misapplication of the public funds, were universally corrected ; provincial oppressors were exposed and defeated : the taxes and tributes were diminished ; and the public expenses were thrown as much as possible upon the public estates, and in some instances upon his own private estates. So far, indeed, did Pius stretch his sympathy with the poorer classes of his subjects, that on this account chiefly he resided permanently in the capital — alleging in excuse, partly that he thus stationed himself in the very centre of his mighty empire, to which all couriers could come by the shortest radii, but chiefly that he thus spared the provincialists those burdens which must else have alighted upon them ; ‘for,’ said he, ‘even the slenderest retinue of a Roman emperor is burthensome to the whole line of its progress.’ His tenderness and consideration, indeed, were extended to all classes, and

all relations of his subjects ; even to those who stood in the shadow of his public displeasure as State delinquents, or as the most atrocious criminals. To the children of great treasury defaulters, he returned the confiscated estates of their fathers, deducting only what might repair the public loss. And so resolutely did he refuse to shed the blood of any in the senatorial order, to whom he conceived himself more especially bound in paternal ties, that even a parricide, whom the laws would not suffer to live, was simply exposed upon a desert island.

Little, indeed, did Pius want of being a perfect Christian, in heart and in practice. Yet all this display of goodness and merciful indulgence, nay, all his munificence, would have availed him little with the people at large, had he neglected to furnish shows and exhibitions in the arena of suitable magnificence. Luckily for his reputation, he exceeded the general standard of imperial splendor not less as the patron of the amphitheatre than in his more important functions. It is recorded of him — that in one *missio* he sent forward on the arena a hundred lions. Nor was he less distinguished by the rarity of the wild animals which he exhibited than by their number. There were elephants, there were crocodiles, there were hippopotami at one time upon the stage : there was also the rhinoceros, and the still rarer *crocuta* or *corocotta*, with a few *strepsikerores*. Some of these were matched in duels, some in

general battles with tigers ; in fact, there was no species of wild animal throughout the deserts and sandy *Zaarras* of Africa, the infinite *steppes* of Asia, or the lawnv recesses and dim forests of then sylvan Europe,<sup>34</sup> no species known to natural history, (and some even of which naturalists have lost sight,) which the Emperor Pius did not produce to his Roman subjects on his ceremonious pomps. And in another point he carried his splendors to a point which set the seal to his liberality. In the phrase of modern auctioneers, he gave up the wild beasts to slaughter ‘without reserve.’ It was the custom, in ordinary cases, so far to consider the enormous cost of these far-fetched rarities as to preserve for future occasions those which escaped the arrows of the populace, or survived the bloody combats in which they were engaged. Thus, out of the overflowings of one great exhibition, would be found materials for another. But Pius would not allow of these reservations. All were given up unreservedly to the savage purposes of the spectators ; land and sea were ransacked ; the sanctuaries of the torrid zone were violated ; columns of the army were put in motion—and all for the transient effect of crowning an extra hour with hecatombs of forest blood, each separate minute of which had cost a king’s ransom.

Yet these displays were alien to the nature of Pius ; and even through the tyranny of custom, he had been so little changed, that to the last he continued to turn

aside, as often as the public ritual of his duty allowed him, from these fierce spectacles to the gentler amusements of fishing and hunting. His taste and his affections naturally carried him to all domestic pleasures of a quiet nature. A walk in a shrubbery or along a piazza, enlivened with the conversation of a friend or two, pleased him better than all the court festivals; and among festivals or anniversary celebrations, he preferred those which, like the harvest-home or feast of the vintagers, whilst they sanctioned a total carelessness and dismissal of public anxieties, were at the same time colored by the innocent gayety which belongs to rural and to primitive manners. In person, this emperor was tall and dignified (*staturâ elevatâ decorus*); but latterly he stooped; to remedy which defect, that he might discharge his public part with the more decorum, he wore stays.<sup>35</sup> Of his other personal habits little is recorded, except that, early in the morning and just before receiving the compliments of his friends and dependents (*salutatores*), or what in modern phrase would be called his *levee*, he took a little plain bread (*panem siccum comedit*), that is, bread without condiments or accompaniments of any kind, by way of breakfast. In no meal has luxury advanced more upon the model of the ancients than in this; the dinners (*cænæ*) of the Romans were even more luxurious, and a thousand times more costly, than our own; but their breakfasts were scandalously

meagre; and, with many men, breakfast was no professed meal at all. Galen tells us that a little bread, and at most a little seasoning of oil, honey, or dried fruits, was the utmost breakfast which men generally allowed themselves: some indeed drank wine after it, but this was far from being a common practice.<sup>36</sup>

The Emperor Pius died in his seventieth year. The immediate occasion of his death was — not breakfast nor *cæna*, but something of the kind. He had received a present of Alpine cheese, and he ordered some for supper. The trap for his life was baited with toasted cheese. There is no reason to think that he ate immoderately; but that night he was ceased with indigestion. Delirium followed; during which it is singular that his mind teemed with a class of imagery and of passions the most remote (as it might have been thought) from the voluntary occupations of his thoughts. He raved about the State, and about those kings with whom he was displeased; nor were his thoughts one moment removed from the public service. Yet he was the least ambitious of princes, and his reign was emphatically said to be bloodless. Finding his fever increase, he became sensible that he was dying; and he ordered the golden statue of Prosperity, a household symbol of empire, to be transferred from his own bedroom to that of his successor. Once again, however, for the last time, he gave the word to the officer of the guard; and, soon after, turning away his face to the

wall against which his bed was placed, he passed out of life in the very gentlest sleep, '*quasi dormiret, spiritum reddidit*;' or, as a Greek author expresses it, κατ' ἴσιν ὑπνῶ τῷ μαλακωτάτῳ. He was one of those few Roman emperors whom posterity truly honored with the title of ἀναιματος (or bloodless); *solusque omnium propè principum prorsus sine civili sanguine et hostili vixit*. In the whole tenor of his life and character he was thought to resemble Numa. And Pausanias, after remarking on his title of Εὐσεβής (or Pius), upon the meaning and origin of which there are several different hypotheses, closes with this memorable tribute to his paternal qualities — δοξή δὲ ἐμῇ, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυροῦ φερόιτο ἂν τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ, Πατὴρ ἀνθρώπων καλούμενος: *but, in my opinion, he should also bear the name of Cyrus the elder — being hailed as Father of the Human Race.*

A thoughtful Roman would have been apt to exclaim, *This is too good to last*, upon finding so admirable a ruler succeeded by one still more admirable in the person of Marcus Aurelius. From the first dawn of his infancy, this prince indicated, by his grave deportment, the philosophic character of his mind; and at eleven years of age he professed himself a formal devotee of philosophy in its strictest form, — assuming the garb, and submitting to its most ascetic ordinances. In particular, he slept upon the ground, and in other respects he practised a style of living the most simple and remote from the habits of rich men [or, in his



own words, τὸ λιτὸν κατὰ τὴν διαίταν, καὶ ποῦδ' ὦ τῆς πλεονακῆς ἀγωγῆς]; though it is true that he himself ascribes this simplicity of life to the influence of his mother and not to the premature assumption of the stoical character. He pushed his austerities indeed to excess; for Dio mentions that in his boyish days he was reduced to great weakness by exercises too severe, and a diet of too little nutriment. In fact, his whole heart was set upon philosophic attainments, and perhaps upon philosophic glory. All the great philosophers of his own time, whether Stoic or Peripatetic, and amongst them Sextus of Cheronæa, a nephew of Plutarch, were retained as his instructors. There was none whom he did not enrich; and as many as were fitted by birth and manners to fill important situations, he raised to the highest offices in the State. Philosophy, however, did not so much absorb his affections, but that he found time to cultivate the fine arts (painting he both studied and practised), and such gymnastic exercises as he held consistent with his public dignity. Wrestling, hunting, fowling, playing at cricket (*pila*), he admired and patronized by personal participation. He tried his powers even as a runner. But with these tasks, and entering so critically, both as a connoisseur and as a practising amateur, into such trials of skill, so little did he relish the very same spectacles when connected with the cruel exhibitions of the circus and amphitheatre, that it was not without some friendly violence on

the part of those who could venture on such a liberty, nor even thus, perhaps, without the necessities of his official station, that he would be persuaded to visit either one or the other.<sup>37</sup> In this he meditated no reflection upon his father by adoption, the Emperor Pius (who also, for aught we know, might secretly revolt from a species of amusement which, as the prescriptive test of munificence in the popular estimate, it was necessary to support); on the contrary, he obeyed him with the punctiliousness of a Roman obedience; he watched the very motions of his countenance; and he waited so continually upon his pleasure, that for three-and-twenty years which they lived together, he is recorded to have slept out of his father's palace only for two nights. This rigor of filial duty illustrates a feature of Roman life; for such was the sanctity of law, that a father created by legal fiction was in all respects treated with the same veneration and affection, as a father who claimed upon the most unquestioned footing of natural right. Such, however, is the universal baseness of courts, that even this scrupulous and minute attention to his duties, did not protect Marcus from the injurious insinuations of whisperers. There were not wanting persons who endeavored to turn to account the general circumstances in the situation of the Cæsar, which pointed him out to the jealousy of the emperor. But these being no more than what adhere necessarily to the case of every heir *as such*, and meeting fortunately

with no more proneness to suspicion in the temper of the Augustus than they did with countenance in the conduct of the Cæsar, made so little impression, that at length these malicious efforts died away, from mere defect of encouragement.

The most interesting political crisis in the reign of Marcus was the war in Germany with the Marcomanni, concurrently with pestilence in Rome. The agitation of the public mind was intense; and prophets arose, as since under corresponding circumstances in Christian countries, who announced the approaching dissolution of the world. The purse of Marcus was open, as usual, to the distresses of his subjects. But it was chiefly for the expense of funerals that his aid was claimed. In this way he alleviated the domestic calamities of his capital, or expressed his sympathy with the sufferers, where alleviation was beyond his power; whilst, by the energy of his movements and his personal presence on the Danube, he soon dissipated those anxieties of Rome which pointed in a foreign direction. The war, however, had been a dreadful one, and had excited such just fears in the most experienced heads of the State, that, happening in its outbreak to coincide with a Parthian war, it was skilfully protracted until the entire thunders of Rome, and the undivided energies of her supreme captains, could be concentrated upon this single point. Both<sup>38</sup> emperors left Rome, and crossed the Alps; the war was thrown back upon its native

seats -- Austria and the modern Hungary: great battles were fought and won; and peace, with consequent relief and restoration to liberty, was reconquered for many friendly nations, who had suffered under the ravages of the Marcomanni, the Sarmatians, the Quadi, and the Vandals; whilst some of the hostile people were nearly obliterated from the map, and their names blotted out from the memory of men.

Since the days of Gaul as an independent power, no war had so much alarmed the people of Rome; and their fear was justified by the difficulties and prodigious efforts which accompanied its suppression. The public treasury was exhausted; loans were an engine of fiscal policy, not then understood or perhaps practicable; and great distress was at hand for the State. In these circumstances, Marcus adopted a wise (though it was then esteemed a violent or desperate) remedy. Time and excessive luxury had accumulated in the imperial palaces and villas vast repositories of apparel, furniture, jewels, pictures, and household utensils, valuable alike for the materials and the workmanship. Many of these articles were consecrated, by color or otherwise, to the use of the *sacred* household; and to have been found in possession of them, or with the materials for making them, would have entailed the penalties of treason. All these stores were now brought out to open day, and put up to public sale by auction, free license being first granted to the bidders, whoever they might be, to use

or otherwise to exercise the fullest rights of property upon all they bought. The auction lasted for two months. Every man was guaranteed in the peaceable ownership of his purchases. And afterwards, when the public distress had passed over, a still further indulgence was extended to the purchasers. Notice was given—that all who were dissatisfied with their purchases, or who for other means might wish to recover their cost, would receive back the purchase money, upon returning the articles. Dinner services of gold and crystal, murrhine vases, and even his wife's wardrobe of silken robes interwoven with gold, all these, and countless other articles, were accordingly returned, and the full auction prices paid back; or were *not* returned, and no displeasure shown to those who publicly displayed them as their own. Having gone so far, overruled by the necessities of the public service, in breaking down those legal barriers by which a peculiar dress, furniture, equipage, &c., were appropriated to the imperial house, as distinguished from the very highest of the noble houses, Marcus had a sufficient pretext for extending indefinitely the effect of the dispensation then granted. Articles purchased at the auction bore no characteristic marks to distinguish them from others of the same form and texture: so that a license to use any one article of the *sacred* pattern, became necessarily a general license for all others which resembled them. And thus, without

abrogating the prejudices which protected the imperial precedency, a body of sumptuary laws — the most ruinous to the progress of manufacturing skill,<sup>39</sup> which has ever been devised — were silently suspended. One or two aspiring families might be offended by these innovations, which meantime gave the pleasures of enjoyment to thousands, and of hope to millions.

But these, though very noticeable relaxations of the existing prerogative, were, as respected the temper which dictated them, no more than every-day manifestations of the emperor's perpetual benignity. Fortunately for Marcus, the indestructible privilege of the *divina domus* exalted it so unapproachably beyond all competition, that no possible remissions of aulic rigor could ever be misinterpreted; fear there could be none, lest such paternal indulgences should lose their effect and acceptance as pure condescensions. They could neither injure their author, who was otherwise charmed and consecrated, from disrespect; nor could they suffer injury themselves by misconstruction, or seem other than sincere, coming from a prince whose entire life was one long series of acts expressing the same affable spirit. Such, indeed, was the effect of this uninterrupted benevolence in the emperor, that at length all men, according to their several ages, hailed him as their father, son, or brother. And when he died, in the sixty-first year of his life (the 18th of his reign), he was lamented with a corresponding pe-

culiarity in the public ceremonial, such, for instance, as the studied interfusion of the senatorial body with the populace, expressive of the levelling power of a true and comprehensive grief; a peculiarity for which no precedent was found, and which never afterwards became a precedent for similar honors to the best of his successors.

But malice has the divine privilege of ubiquity; and therefore it was that even this great model of private and public virtue did not escape the foulest libels: he was twice accused of murder; once on the person of a gladiator, with whom the empress is said to have fallen in love; and again, upon his associate in the empire, who died in reality of an apoplectic seizure, on his return from the German campaign. Neither of these atrocious fictions ever gained the least hold of the public attention, so entirely were they put down by the *primâ facie* evidence of facts, and of the emperor's notorious character. In fact his faults, if he had any in his public life, were entirely those of too much indulgence. In a few cases of enormous guilt, it is recorded that he showed himself inexorable. But, generally speaking, he was far otherwise; and, in particular, he carried his indulgence to his wife's vices to an access which drew upon him the satirical notice of the stage.

The gladiators, and still more the sailors of that age, were constantly to be seen plying naked, and Faustina

was shameless enough to take her station in places which gave her the advantages of a leisurely review; and she actually selected favorites from both classes on the ground of a personal inspection. With others of greater rank she is said even to have been surprised by her husband; in particular with one called Tertullus, at dinner.<sup>40</sup> But to all remonstrances on this subject, Marcus is reported to have replied, '*Si uxorem dimittimus, reddamus et dotem*;' meaning that, having received his right of succession to the empire simply by his adoption into the family of Pius, his wife's father, gratitude and filial duty obliged him to view any dishonors emanating from his wife's conduct as joint legacies with the splendors inherited from their common father; in short, that he was not at liberty to separate the rose from its thorns. However, the facts are not sufficiently known to warrant us in criticizing very severely his behavior on so trying an occasion. It would be too much for human frailty, that absolutely no stain should remain upon his memory. Possibly the best use which can be made of such a fact is, in the way of consolation to any unhappy man, whom his wife may too liberally have endowed with honors of this kind, by reminding him that he shares this distinction with the great philosophic emperor. The reflection upon this story by one of his biographers is this — 'Such is the force of daily life in a good ruler, so great the power of his sanctity, gentleness, and



piety, that no breath of slander or invidious suggestion from an acquaintance can avail to sully his memory. In short, to Antonine, immutable as the heavens in the tenor of his own life, and in the manifestations of his own moral temper, and who was not by possibility liable to any impulse or "shadow of turning" from another man's suggestion, it was not eventually an injury that he was dishonored by some of his connections; on him, invulnerable in his own character, neither a harlot for his wife, nor a gladiator for his son, could inflict a wound. Then as now, oh sacred lord Dioclesian, he was reputed a God; not as others are reputed, but specially and in a peculiar sense, and with a privilege to such worship from all men as you yourself addressed to him — who often breathe a wish to Heaven, that you were or could be such in life and merciful disposition as was Marcus Aurelius.'

What this encomiast says in a rhetorical tone was literally true. Marcus was raised to divine honors, or canonized <sup>41</sup> (as in Christian phrase we might express it). That was a matter of course; and, considering with whom he shared such honors, they are of little account in expressing the grief and veneration which followed him. A circumstance more characteristic, in the record of those observances which attested the public feeling, is this — that he who at that time had no bust, picture, or statue of Marcus in his house, was 'looked upon as a profane and irreligious man. Finally,

to do him honor not by testimonies of men's opinions in his favor, but by facts of his own life and conduct, one memorable trophy there is amongst the moral distinctions of the philosophic Cæsar, utterly unnoticed hitherto by historians, but which will hereafter obtain a conspicuous place in any perfect record of the steps by which civilization has advanced, and human nature has been exalted. It is this: Marcus Aurelius was the first great military leader (and his civil office as supreme interpreter and creator of law consecrated his example) who allowed rights indefeasible — rights uncanceled by his misfortune in the field, to the prisoner of war. Others had been merciful and variously indulgent, upon their own discretion, and upon a random impulse to some, or possibly to all of their prisoners; but this was either in submission to the usage of that particular war, or to special self-interest, or at most to individual good feeling. None had allowed a prisoner to challenge any forbearance as of right. But Marcus Aurelius first resolutely maintained that certain indestructible rights adhered to every soldier, simply as a man, which rights, capture by the sword, or any other accident of war, could do nothing to shake or diminish. We have noticed other instances in which Marcus Aurelius labored, at the risk of his popularity, to elevate the condition of human nature. But those, though equally expressing the goodness and loftiness of his nature, were by accident directed to a perishable

institution, which time has swept away, and along with it therefore his reformations. Here, however, is an immortal act of goodness built upon an immortal basis; for so long as armies congregate, and the sword is the arbiter of international quarrels, so long it will deserve to be had in remembrance, that the first man who set limits to the empire of wrong, and first translated within the jurisdiction of man's moral nature that state of war which had heretofore been consigned, by principle no less than by practice, to anarchy, animal violence, and brute force, was also the first philosopher who sat upon a throne.

In this, as in his universal spirit of forgiveness, we cannot but acknowledge a Christian by anticipation; nor can we hesitate to believe, that through one or other of his many philosophic friends,<sup>42</sup> whose attention Christianity was by that time powerful to attract, some reflex images of Christian doctrines — some half-conscious perception of its perfect beauty — had flashed upon his mind. And when we view him from this distant age, as heading that shining array, the Howards and the Wilberforces, who have since then in a practical sense hearkened to the sighs of 'all prisoners and captives' — we are ready to suppose him addressed by the great Founder of Christianity, in the words of Scripture, '*Verily, I say unto thee, Thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven.*'

As a supplement to the reign of Marcus Aurelius,

we ought to notice the rise of one great rebel, the sole civil disturber of his time, in Syria. This was Avidius Cassius, whose descent from Cassius (the noted conspirator against the great Dictator, Julius) seems to have suggested to him a wandering idea, and at length a formal purpose of restoring the ancient republic. Avidius was the commander-in-chief of the Oriental army, whose head-quarters were then fixed at Antioch. His native disposition, which inclined him to cruelty, and his political views, made him, from his first entrance upon office, a severe disciplinarian. The well known enormities of the neighboring Daphne gave him ample opportunities for the exercise of his harsh propensities in reforming the dissolute soldiery. He amputated heads, arms, feet, and hams: he turned out his mutilated victims, as walking spectacles of warning; he burned them; he smoked them to death; and, in one instance, he crucified a detachment of his army, together with their centurions, for having, unauthorized, gained a splendid victory, and captured a large booty on the Danube. Upon this the soldiers mutinied against him, in mere indignation at his tyranny. However, he prosecuted his purpose, and prevailed, by his bold contempt of the danger which menaced him. From the abuses in the army, he proceeded to attack the abuses of the civil administration. But as these were protected by the example of the great proconsular lieutenants and provincial governors, policy

obliged him to confine himself to verbal expressions of anger; until at length sensible that this impotent railing did but expose him to contempt, he resolved to arm himself with the powers of radical reform, by open rebellion. His ultimate purpose was the restoration of the ancient republic, or, (as he himself expresses it in an interesting letter which yet survives,) ‘*ut in antiquum statum publica forma reddatur;*’ *i. e.* that the constitution should be restored to its original condition. And this must be effected by military violence and the aid of the executioner—or, in his own words, *multis gladiis, multis elogiis*, (by innumerable sabres, by innumerable records of condemnation.) Against this man Marcus was warned by his imperial colleague Lucius Verus, in a very remarkable letter. After expressing his suspicions of him generally, the writer goes on to say—‘I would you had him closely watched. For he is a general disliker of us and of our doings; he is gathering together an enormous treasure, and he makes an open jest of our literary pursuits. You, for instance, he calls a philosophizing old woman, and me a dissolute buffoon and scamp. Consider what you would have done. For my part, I bear the fellow no ill will; but again I say, take care that he does not do a mischief to yourself, or your children.’

The answer of Marcus is noble and characteristic; ‘I have read your letter, and I will confess to you I think it more scrupulously timid than becomes an

emperor, and timid in a way unsuited to the spirit of our times. Consider this — if the empire is destined to Cassius by the decrees of Providence, in that case it will not be in our power to put him to death, however much we may desire to do so. You know your grandfather's saying, — No prince ever killed his own heir — no man, that is, ever yet prevailed against one whom Providence had marked out as his successor. On the other hand, if providence opposes him, then, without any cruelty on our part, he will spontaneously fall into some snare spread for him by destiny. Besides, we cannot treat a man as under impeachment whom nobody impeaches, and whom, by your own confession, the soldiers love. Then again, in cases of high treason, even those criminals who are convicted upon the clearest evidence, yet, as friendless and deserted persons contending against the powerful, and matched against those who are armed with the whole authority of the State, seems to suffer some wrong. You remember what your grandfather said : Wretched, indeed, is the fate of princes, who then first obtain credit in any charges of conspiracy which they allege — when they happen to seal the validity of their charges against the plotters, by falling martyrs to the plot. Domitian it was, in fact, who first uttered this truth ; but I choose rather to place it under the authority of Hadrian, because the sayings of tyrants, even when they are true and happy, carry less weight with them

than naturally they ought. For Cassius, then, let him keep his present temper and inclinations; and the more so — being (as he is) a good General — austere in his discipline, brave, and one whom the State cannot afford to lose. For as to what you insinuate — that I ought to provide for my children's interests, by putting this man judiciously out of the way, very frankly I say to you — Perish my children, if Avidius shall deserve more attachment than they, and if it shall prove salutary to the State that Cassius should live rather than the children of Marcus.'

This letter affords a singular illustration of fatalism, such certainly as we might expect in a Stoic, but carried even to a Turkish excess; and not theoretically professed only, but practically acted upon in a case of capital hazard. *That no prince ever killed his own successor, i. e.* that it was in vain for a prince to put conspirators to death, because, by the very possibility of doing so, a demonstration is obtained that such conspirators had never been destined to prosper, is as condensed and striking an expression of fatalism as ever has been devised. The rest of the letter is truly noble, and breathes the very soul of careless magnanimity reposing upon conscious innocence. Meantime Cassius increased in power and influence: his army had become a most formidable engine of his ambition through its restored discipline; and his own authority was sevenfold greater, because he had himself created

that discipline in the face of unequalled temptations hourly renewed and rooted in the very centre of his head-quarters. ‘Daphne, by Orontes,’ a suburb of Antioch, was infamous for its seductions : and *Daphnic luxury* had become proverbial for expressing an excess of voluptuousness, such as other places could not rival by mere defect of means, and preparations elaborate enough to sustain it in all its varieties of mode, or to conceal it from public notice. In the very purlieus of this great nest, or sty of sensuality, within sight and touch of its pollutions, did he keep his army fiercely reined up, daring and defying them, as it were, to taste of the banquet whose very odor they inhaled.

Thus provided with the means, and improved instruments, for executing his purposes, he broke out into open rebellion ; and, though hostile to the *principatus*, or personal supremacy of one man, he did not feel his republican purism at all wounded by the style and title of *Imperator*, — that being a military term, and a mere titular honor, which had co-existed with the severest forms of republicanism. *Imperator*, then, he was saluted and proclaimed ; and doubtless the writer of the warning letter from Syria would now declare that the sequel had justified the fears which Marcus had thought so unbecoming to a Roman emperor. But again Marcus would have said, ‘Let us wait for the sequel of the sequel,’ and that would have justified him. It is often found by experience that men, who



have learned to reverence a person in authority chiefly by his offices of correction applied to their own aberrations, — who have known and feared him, in short, in his character of reformer, — will be more than usually inclined to desert him on his first movement in the direction of wrong. Their obedience being founded on fear, and fear being never wholly disconnected from hatred, they naturally seize with eagerness upon the first lawful pretext for disobedience : the luxury of revenge is, in such a case, too potent, — a meritorious disobedience too novel a temptation, — to have a chance of being rejected. Never, indeed, does erring human nature look more abject than in the person of a severe exactor of duty, who has immolated thousands to the wrath of offended law, suddenly himself becoming a capital offender, a glozing tempter in search of accomplices, and in that character at once standing before the meanest of his own dependents as a self-deposed officer, liable to any man's arrest, and, *ipso facto*, a suppliant for his own mercy. The stern and haughty Cassius, who had so often tightened the cords of discipline until they threatened to snap asunder, now found, experimentally, the bitterness of these obvious truths. The trembling sentinel now looked insolently in his face ; the cowering legionary, with whom 'to hear was to obey,' now mused or even bandied words upon his orders ; the great lieutenants of his office, who stood next to his own person in

authority, were preparing for revolt, open or secret, as circumstances should prescribe ; not the accuser only, but the very avenger, was upon his steps ; Nemesis, that Nemesis who once so closely adhered to the name and fortunes of the lawful Cæsar, turning against every one of his assassins the edge of his own assassinating sword, was already at his heels ; and in the midst of a sudden prosperity, and its accompanying shouts of gratulation, he heard the sullen knells of approaching death. Antioch, it was true, the great Roman capital of the Orient, bore him, for certain motives of self-interest, peculiar good-will. But there was no city of the world in which the Roman Cæsar did not reckon many liege-men and partisans. And the very hands, which dressed his altars and crowned his Prætorian pavilion, might not improbably in that same hour put an edge upon the sabre which was to avenge the injuries of the too indulgent and long suffering Antoninus. Meantime, to give a color of patriotism to his treason, Cassius alleged public motives ; in a letter, which he wrote after assuming the purple, he says : ‘ Wretched empire, miserable state, which endures these hungry blood-suckers battening on her vitals !— A worthy man, doubtless, is Marcus ; who, in his eagerness to be reputed clement, suffers those to live whose conduct he himself abhors. Where is that L. Cassius, whose name I vainly inherit ? Where is that Marcus, — not Aurelius, mark you, but Cato Censorius ?

Where the good old discipline of ancestral times, long since indeed disused, but now not so much as looked after in our aspirations? Marcus Antoninus is a scholar; he enacts the philosopher; and he tries conclusions upon the four elements, and upon the nature of the soul; and he discourses most learnedly upon the *Honestum*; and concerning the *Summum Bonum* he is unanswerable. Meanwhile, is he learned in the interests of the State? Can he argue a point upon the public economy? You see what a host of sabres is required, what a host of impeachments, sentences, executions, before the commonwealth can reassume its ancient integrity! What! shall I esteem as proconsuls, as governors, those who for that end only deem themselves invested with lieutenancies or great senatorial appointments, that they may gorge themselves with the provincial luxuries and wealth? No doubt you heard in what way our friend the philosopher gave the place of prætorian prefect to one who but three days before was a bankrupt,—insolvent, by G—, and a beggar. Be not you content: that same gentlemen is now as rich as a prefect should be; and has been so, I tell you, any time these three days. And how, I pray you, how—how, my good sir? How, but out of the bowels of the provinces, and the marrow of their bones? But no matter, let them be rich; let them be blood-suckers; so much, God willing, shall they regorge into the treasury of the empire. Let but Heaven smile upon

our party, and the Cassiani shall return to the republic its old impersonal supremacy.'

But Heaven did *not* smile; nor did man. Rome heard with bitter indignation of this old traitor's ingratitude, and his false mask of republican civism. Excepting Marcus Aurelius himself, not one man but thirsted for revenge. And that was soon obtained. He and all his supporters, one after the other, rapidly fell (as Marcus had predicted) into snares laid by the officers who continued true to their allegiance. Except the family and household of Cassius, there remained in a short time none for the vengeance of the Senate, or for the mercy of the Emperor. In *them* centred the last arrears of hope and fear, of chastisement or pardon, depending upon this memorable revolt. And about the disposal of their persons arose the final question to which the case gave birth. The letters yet remain in which the several parties interested gave utterance to the passions which possessed them. Faustina, the Empress, urged her husband with feminine violence to adopt against his prisoners comprehensive acts of vengeance. 'Noli parcere hominibus,' says she, 'qui tibi non pepercerunt; et nec mihi nec filiis nostris parcerent, si vicissent.' And elsewhere she irritates his wrath against the army as accomplices for the time, and as a body of men 'qui, nisi opprimuntur, opprimunt.' We may be sure of the result. After commending her zeal for her own family, he says,

‘Ego vero et ejus liberis parcam, et genero, et uxori; et ad senatum scribam ne aut proscriptio gravior sit, aut poena crudelior;’ adding that, had his counsels prevailed, not even Cassius himself should have perished. As to his relatives, ‘Why,’ he asks, ‘should I speak of pardon to them, who indeed have done no wrong, and are blameless even in purpose?’ Accordingly, his letter of intercession to the Senate protests, that, so far from asking for further victims to the crime of Avidius Cassius, would to God he could call back from the dead many of those who had fallen! With immense applause, and with turbulent acclamations, the Senate granted all his requests ‘in consideration of his philosophy, of his long-suffering, of his learning and accomplishments, of his nobility, of his innocence.’ And until a monster arose who delighted in the blood of the guiltless, it is recorded that the posterity of Avidius Cassius lived in security, and were admitted to honors and public distinctions by favor of him, whose life and empire that memorable traitor had sought to undermine under the favor of his guileless master’s too confiding magnanimity.

## CHAPTER V.

THE Roman empire, and the Roman emperors, it might naturally be supposed by one who had not as yet traversed that tremendous chapter in the history of man, would be likely to present a separate and almost equal interest. The empire, in the first place, as the most magnificent monument of human power which our planet has beheld, must for that single reason, even though its records were otherwise of little interest, fix upon itself the very keenest gaze from all succeeding ages to the end of time. To trace the fortunes and revolution of that unrivalled monarchy over which the Roman eagle brooded, to follow the dilapidations of that aerial arch, which silently and steadily through seven centuries ascended under the colossal architecture of the children of Romulus, to watch the unweaving of the golden arras, and step by step to see paralysis stealing over the once perfect cohesion of the republican creations,—cannot but insure a severe, though melancholy delight. On its own separate account, the decline of this throne-shattering power must and will engage the foremost place amongst all historical reviewers. The ‘dislimning’ and unmoulding of some mighty pageantry in the

heavens has its own appropriate grandeurs, no less than the gathering of its cloudy pomps. The going down of the sun is contemplated with no less awe than his rising. Nor is any thing portentous in its growth, which is not also portentous in the steps and ‘moments’ of its decay. Hence, in the second place, we might presume a commensurate interest in the characters and fortunes of the successive emperors. If the empire challenged our first survey, the next would seem due to the Cæsars who guided its course; to the great ones who retarded, and to the bad ones who precipitated, its ruin.

Such might be the natural expectation of an inexperienced reader. But it is *not* so. The Cæsars, throughout their long line, are not interesting, neither personally in themselves, nor derivatively from the tragic events to which their history is attached. Their whole interest lies in their situation—in the unapproachable altitude of their thrones. But considered with a reference to their human qualities, scarcely one in the whole series can be viewed with a human interest apart from the circumstances of his position. ‘Pass like shadows, so depart!’ The reason for this defect of all personal variety of interest in these enormous potentates, must be sought in the constitution of their power and the very necessities of their office. Even the greatest among them, those who by way of distinction were called *the Great*, as Constantine and

Theodosius, were not great, for they were not magnanimous; nor could they be so under *their* tenure of power, which made it a duty to be suspicious, and, by fastening upon all varieties of original temper one dire necessity of bloodshed, extinguished under this monotonous cloud of cruel jealousy and everlasting panic every characteristic feature of genial human nature, that would else have emerged through so long a train of princes. There is a remarkable story told of Aprispina, that, upon some occasions, when a wizard announced to her, as truths which he had read in the heavens, the two fatal necessities impending over her son, — one that he should ascend to empire, the other that he should murder herself, she replied in these stern and memorable words — *Occidat dum imperet*. Upon which a continental writer comments thus: ‘Never before or since have three such words issued from the lips of woman; and in truth, one knows not which most to abominate or admire — the aspiring princess, or the loving mother. Meantime, in these few words lies naked to the day, in its whole hideous deformity, the very essence of Romanism and the imperial power, and one might here consider the mother of Nero as the impersonation of that monstrous condition.’

This is true: *Occidat dum imperet*, was the watchword and very cognizance of the Roman emperor. But almost equally it was his watchword — *Occidatur*



*dum imperet.* Doing or suffering, the Cæsars were almost equally involved in bloodshed ; very few that were not murderers, and nearly all were themselves murdered.

The empire, then, must be regarded as the primary object of our interest ; and it is in this way only that any secondary interest arises for the emperors. Now, with respect to the empire, the first question which presents itself is, — Whence, that is, from what causes and from what era, we are to date its decline ? Gibbon, as we all know, dates it from the reign of Commodus ; but certainly upon no sufficient, or even plausible grounds. Our own opinion we shall state boldly : the empire itself, from the very era of its establishment, was one long decline of the Roman power. A vast monarchy had been created and consolidated by the all-conquering instincts of a republic — cradled and nursed in wars, and essentially warlike by means of all its institutions<sup>43</sup> and by the habits of the people. This monarchy had been of too slow a growth — too gradual, and too much according to the regular stages of nature herself in its development, to have any chance of being other than well cemented : the cohesion of its parts was intense ; seven centuries of growth demand one or two at least for palpable decay ; and it is only for harlequin empires like that of Napoleon, run up with the rapidity of pantomime, to fall asunder under the instant re-action of a few false moves in

politics, or a single unfortunate campaign. Hence it was, and from the prudence of Augustus acting through a very long reign, sustained at no very distant interval by the personal inspection and revisions of Hadrian, that for some time the Roman power seemed to be stationary. What else could be expected? The mere strength of the impetus derived from the republican institutions could not but propagate itself, and cause even a motion in advance, for some time after those institutions had themselves given way. And, besides, the military institutions survived all others; and the army continued very much the same in its discipline and composition, long after Rome and all its civic institutions had bent before an utter revolution. It was very possible even that emperors should have arisen with martial propensities, and talents capable of masking, for many years, by specious but transitory conquests, the causes that were silently sapping the foundations of Roman supremacy; and thus by accidents of personal character and taste, an empire might even have expanded itself in appearance, which, by all its permanent and real tendencies, was even then shrinking within narrower limits, and travelling downwards to dissolution. In reality one such emperor there was. Trajan, whether by martial inclinations, or (as is supposed by some) by dissatisfaction with his own position at Rome, when brought into more immediate connection with the senate, was driven into needless

war ; and he achieved conquests in the direction of Dacia as well as Parthia. But that these conquests were not substantial, — that they were connected by no true cement of cohesion with the existing empire, is evident from the rapidity with which they were abandoned. In the next reign, the empire had already recoiled within its former limits ; and in two reigns further on, under Marcus Antoninus, though a prince of elevated character and warlike in his policy, we find such concessions of territory made to the Marcomanni and others, as indicate too plainly the shrinking energies of a waning empire. In reality, if we consider the polar opposition, in point of interest and situation, between the great officers of the republic and the Augustus or Cæsar of the empire, we cannot fail to see the immense effect which that difference must have had upon the permanent spirit of conquest. Cæsar was either adopted or elected to a situation of infinite luxury and enjoyment. He had no interests to secure by fighting in person ; and he had a powerful interest in preventing others from fighting ; since in that way only he could raise up competitors to himself, and dangerous seducers of the army. A consul, on the other hand, or great lieutenant of the senate, had nothing to enjoy or to hope for, when his term of office should have expired, unless according to his success in creating military fame and influence for himself. Those Cæsars who fought whilst the empire was or seemed to

be stationary, as Trajan, did so from personal taste. Those who fought in after centuries, when the decay became apparent, and dangers drew nearer, as Aurelian, did so from the necessities of fear; and under neither impulse were they likely to make durable conquests. The spirit of conquest having therefore departed at the very time when conquest would have become more difficult even to the republican energies, both from remoteness of ground and from the martial character of the chief nations which stood beyond the frontier, — it was a matter of necessity that with the republican institutions should expire the whole principle of territorial aggrandizement; and that, if the empire seemed to be stationary for some time after its establishment by Julius, and its final settlement by Augustus, this was through no strength of its own, or inherent in its own constitution, but through the continued action of that strength which it had inherited from the republic. In a philosophical sense, therefore, it may be affirmed, that the empire of the Cæsars was *always* in decline; ceasing to go forward, it could not do other than retrograde; and even the first *appearances* of decline can, with no propriety, be referred to the reign of Commodus. His vices exposed him to public contempt and assassination; but neither one nor the other had any effect upon the strength of the empire. Here, therefore, is one just subject of complaint against Gibbon, that he has dated the declension of the Roman

power from a commencement arbitrarily assumed ; another, and a heavier, is, that he has failed to notice the steps and separate indications of decline as they arose, — the moments (to speak in the language of dynamics) through which the decline travelled onwards to its consummation. It is also a grievous offence as regards the true purposes of history, — and one which, in a complete exposition of the imperial history, we should have a right to insist on, — that Gibbon brings forward only such facts as allow of a scenical treatment, and seems everywhere, by the glancing style of his allusions, to presuppose an acquaintance with that very history which he undertakes to deliver. Our immediate purpose, however, is simply to characterize the office of emperor, and to notice such events and changes as operated for evil, and for a final effect of decay, upon the Cæsars or their empire. As the best means of realizing it, we shall rapidly review the history of both, premising that we confine ourselves to the true Cæsars, and the true empire of the West.

The first overt act of weakness — the first expression of conscious declension, as regarded the foreign enemies of Rome, occurred in the reign of Hadrian ; for it is a very different thing to forbear making conquests, and to renounce them when made. It is possible, however, that the cession then made of Mesopotamia and Armenia, however sure to be interpreted into the language of fear by the enemy, did

not imply any such principle in this emperor. He was of a civic and paternal spirit, and anxious for the substantial welfare of the empire rather than its ostentatious glory. The internal administration of affairs had very much gone into neglect since the times of Augustus; and Hadrian was perhaps right in supposing that he could effect more public good by an extensive progress through the empire, and by a personal correction of abuses, than by any military enterprise. It is, besides, asserted, that he received an indemnity in money for the provinces beyond the Euphrates. But still it remains true, that in his reign the God Terminus made his first retrograde motion; and this emperor became naturally an object of public obloquy at Rome, and his name fell under the superstitious ban of a fatal tradition connected with the foundation of the capital. The two Antonines, Titus and Marcus, who came next in succession, were truly good and patriotic princes; perhaps the only princes in the whole series who combined the virtues of private and of public life. In their reigns the frontier line was maintained in its integrity, and at the expense of some severe fighting under Marcus, who was a strenuous general at the same time that he was a severe student. It is, however, true, as we observed above, that, by allowing a settlement within the Roman frontier to a barbarous people, Marcus Aurelius raised the first ominous precedent in favor of those Gothic, Vandal,

and Frankish hives, who were as yet hidden behind a cloud of years. Homes had been obtained by Trans-Danubian barbarians upon the sacred territory of Rome and Cæsar : that fact remained upon tradition : whilst the terms upon which they had been obtained, how much or how little connected with fear, necessarily became liable to doubt and to oblivion. Here we pause to remark, that the first twelve Cæsars, together with Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines, making seventeen emperors, compose the first of four nearly equal groups, who occupied the throne in succession until the extinction of the Western Empire. And at this point be it observed, — that is, at the termination of the first group, — we take leave of all genuine virtue. In no one of the succeeding princes, if we except Alexander Severus, do we meet with any goodness of heart, or even amiableness of manners. The best of the future emperors, in a public sense, were harsh and repulsive in private character.

The second group, as we have classed them, terminating with Philip the Arab, commences with Commodus. This unworthy prince, although the son of the excellent Marcus Antoninus, turned out a monster of debauchery. At the moment of his father's death, he was present in person at the head-quarters of the army on the Danube, and of necessity partook in many of their hardships. This it was which furnished his evil counsellors with their sole argument for urging his

departure to the capital. A council having been convened, the faction of court sycophants pressed upon his attention the inclemency of the climate, contrasting it with the genial skies and sunny fields of Italy; and the season, which happened to be winter, gave strength to their representations. What! would the emperor be content for ever to hew out the frozen water with an axe before he could assuage his thirst? And, again, the total want of fruit-trees — did that recommend their present station as a fit one for the imperial court? Commodus, ashamed to found his objections to the station upon grounds so unsoldierly as these, affected to be moved by political reasons: some great senatorial house might take advantage of his distance from home, — might seize the palace, fortify it, and raise levies in Italy capable of sustaining its pretensions to the throne. These arguments were combated by Pompeianus, who, besides his personal weight as an officer, had married the eldest sister of the young emperor. Shame prevailed for the present with Commodus, and he dismissed the council with an assurance that he would think farther of it. The sequel was easy to foresee. Orders were soon issued for the departure of the court to Rome, and the task of managing the barbarians of Dacia was delegated to lieutenants. The system upon which these officers executed their commission was a mixed one of terror and persuasion. Some they defeated in battle; and these were the majority; for Herodian



says, *πλείους τῶν βαρβαρῶν ὅπλοις ἐχειρώσαντο*; others they bribed into peace by large sums of money. And no doubt this last article in the policy of Commodus was that which led Gibbon to assign to this reign the first rudiments of the Roman declension. But it should be remembered, that, virtually, this policy was but the further prosecution of that which had already been adopted by Marcus Aurelius. Concessions and temperaments of any sort or degree showed that the Pannonian frontier was in too formidable a condition to be treated with uncompromising rigor. *Τὸ ἀλλεῖμονον ἀντιμένους*, purchasing an immunity from all further anxiety, Commodus (as the historian expresses it) *πάντα ἰδίῃς τὰ αἰτούμενα* —conceded all demands whatever. His journey to Rome was one continued festival: and the whole population of Rome turned out to welcome him. At this period he was undoubtedly the darling of the people: his personal beauty was splendid; and he was connected by blood with some of the greatest nobility. Over this flattering scene of hope and triumph clouds soon gathered; with the mob, indeed, there is reason to think that he continued a favorite to the last; but the respectable part of the citizens were speedily disgusted with his self-degradation, and came to hate him even more than ever or by any class he had been loved. The Roman pride never shows itself more conspicuously throughout all history, than in the alienation of heart which inevitably followed any great and

continued outrages upon his own majesty, committed by their emperor. Cruelties the most atrocious, acts of vengeance the most bloody, patricide, parricide, all were viewed with more toleration than oblivion of his own inviolable sanctity. Hence we imagine the wrath with which Rome would behold Commodus, under the eyes of four hundred thousand spectators, making himself a party to the contests of gladiators. In his earlier exhibition as an archer, it is possible that his matchless dexterity, and his unerring eye, would avail to mitigate the censures: but when the Roman Emperor actually descended to the arena in the garb and equipments of a servile prize-fighter, and personally engaged in combat with such antagonists, having previously submitted to their training and discipline—the public indignation rose to a height, which spoke aloud the language of encouragement to conspiracy and treason. These were not wanting; three memorable plots against his life were defeated; one of them (that of Maternus, the robber) accompanied with romantic circumstances,<sup>44</sup> which we have narrated in an earlier paper of this series. Another was set on foot by his eldest sister, Lucilla; nor did her close relationship protect her from capital punishment. In that instance, the immediate agent of her purposes, Quintianus, a young man, of signal resolution and daring, who had attempted to stab the emperor at the entrance of the amphitheatre, though baffled in his purpose, uttered a word which rang con-

tinually in the ears of Commodus, and poisoned his peace of mind for ever. His vengeance, perhaps, was thus more effectually accomplished than if he had at once dismissed his victim from life. 'The senate,' he had said, 'send thee this through me:' and henceforward the senate was the object of unslumbering suspicions to the emperor. Yet the public suspicions settled upon a different quarter; and a very memorable scene must have pointed his own in the same direction, supposing that he had been previously blind to his danger.

On a day of great solemnity, when Rome had assembled her myriads in the amphitheatre, just at the very moment when the nobles, the magistrates, the priests, all, in short, that was venerable or consecrated in the State, with the Emperor in their centre, had taken their seats, and were waiting for the opening of the shows, a stranger, in the robe of a philosopher, bearing a staff in his hand, (which also was the professional ensign<sup>45</sup> of a philosopher,) stepped forward, and, by the waving of his hand, challenged the attention of Commodus. Deep silence ensued: upon which, in a few words, ominous to the ear as the handwriting on the wall to the eye of Belshazzar, the stranger unfolded to Commodus the instant peril which menaced both his life and his throne, from his great servant Perennius. What personal purpose of benefit to himself this stranger might have connected with his public

warning, or by whom he might have been suborned, was never discovered; for he was instantly arrested by the agents of the great officer whom he had denounced, dragged away to punishment, and put to a cruel death. Commodus dissembled his panic for the present; but soon after, having received undeniable proofs (as is alleged) of the treason imputed to Perennius, in the shape of a coin which had been struck by his son, he caused the father to be assassinated; and, on the same day, by means of forged letters, before this news could reach the son, who commanded the Illyrian armies, he lured him also to destruction, under the belief that he was obeying the summons of his father to a private interview on the Italian frontier. So perished those enemies, if enemies they really were. But to these tragedies succeeded others far more comprehensive in their mischief, and in more continuous succession than is recorded upon any other page of universal history. Rome was ravaged by a pestilence — by a famine — by riots amounting to a civil war — by a dreadful massacre of the unarmed mob — by shocks of earthquake — and, finally, by a fire which consumed the national bank,<sup>46</sup> and the most sumptuous buildings of the city. To these horrors, with a rapidity characteristic of the Roman depravity, and possibly only under the most extensive demoralization of the public mind, succeeded festivals of gorgeous pomp, and amphitheatrical exhibitions, upon a

scale of grandeur absolutely unparalleled by all former attempts. Then were beheld, and familiarized to the eyes of the Roman mob — to children — and to women, animals as yet known to us, says Herodian, only in pictures. Whatever strange or rare animal could be drawn from the depths of India, from Siam and Pegu, or from the unvisited nooks of Ethiopia, were now brought together as subjects for the archery of the universal lord.<sup>47</sup> Invitations (and the invitations of kings are commands) had been scattered on this occasion profusely; not, as heretofore, to individuals or to families — but, as was in proportion to the occasion where an emperor was the chief performer, to nations. People were summoned by circles of longitude and latitude to come and see [*θεασάμενοι ἃ μη προτερον μητε ἑωραμυσσαν μητε ἠκηκοισαν* — things that eye had not seen nor ear heard of] the specious miracles of nature brought together from arctic and from tropic deserts, putting forth their strength, their speed, or their beauty, and glorifying by their deaths the matchless hand of the Roman king. There was beheld the lion from Bilidulgerid, and the leopard from Hindostan — the rein-deer from polar latitudes — the antelope from the Zaara — and the leigh, or gigantic stag, from Britain. Thither came the buffalo and the bison, the white bull of Northumberland and Galloway, the unicorn from the regions of Nepaul or Thibet, the rhinoceros and the river-horse from Senegal, with the elephant of

Ceylon or Siam. The ostrich and the cameleopard, the wild ass and the zebra, the chamois and the ibex of Angora, — all brought their tributes of beauty or deformity to these vast aceldamas of Rome: their savage voices ascended in tumultuous uproar to the chambers of the capitol: a million of spectators sat round them: standing in the centre was a single statuesque figure — the imperial sagittary, beautiful as an Antinous, and majestic as a Jupiter, whose hand was so steady and whose eye so true, that he was never known to miss, and who, in this accomplishment at least, was so absolute in his excellence, that, as we are assured by a writer not disposed to flatter him, the very foremost of the Parthian archers and of the Mauritanian lancers [*Παρθυαίων οἱ τοξικὴν ἀκριβεστες, καὶ Μανρυσίων οἱ ἀκοντιζεῖν ἀριεστοί*] were not able to contend with him. Juvenal, in a well known passage upon the disproportionate endings of illustrious careers, drawing one of his examples from Marius, says, that he ought, for his own glory, and to make his end correspondent to his life, to have died at the moment when he descended from his triumphal chariot at the portals of the capitol. And of Commodus, in like manner, it may be affirmed, that, had he died in the exercise of his peculiar art, with a hecatomb of victims rendering homage to his miraculous skill, by the regularity of the flies which they presented, as they lay stretched out dying or dead upon the arena, — he would have

left a splendid and characteristic impression of himself upon that nation of spectators who had witnessed his performance. He was the noblest artist in his own profession that the world had seen — in archery he was the Robin Hood of Rome ; he was in the very meridian of his youth ; and he was the most beautiful man of his own times [*των κατ' αὐτον ἀνθρώπων καλλεῖ ἐνπρεπεστάτος*]. He would therefore have looked the part admirably of the dying gladiator ; and he would have died in his natural vocation. But it was ordered otherwise ; his death was destined to private malice, and to an ignoble hand. And much obscurity still rests upon the motives of the assassins, though its circumstances are reported with unusual minuteness of detail. One thing is evident, that the public and patriotic motives assigned by the perpetrators as the remote causes of their conspiracy, cannot have been the true ones.

The grave historian may sum up his character of Commodus by saying that, however richly endowed with natural gifts, he abused them all to bad purposes ; that he derogated from his noble ancestors, and disavowed the obligations of his illustrious name ; and, as the climax of his offences, that he dishonored the purple — *αἰσχρῶς ἐπιτηδεύμασιν* — by the baseness of his pursuits. All that is true, and more than that. But these considerations were not of a nature to affect his parasitical attendants very nearly or keenly. Yet the

story runs — that Marcia, his privileged mistress, deeply affected by the anticipation of some further outrages upon his high dignity which he was then meditating, had carried the importunity of her deprecations too far ; that the irritated emperor had consequently inscribed her name, in company with others, (whom he had reason to tax with the same offence, or whom he suspected of similar sentiments,) in his little black book, or pocket souvenir of death ; that this book, being left under the cushion of a sofa, had been conveyed into the hands of Marcia by a little pet boy, called Philo-Commodus, who was caressed equally by the emperor and by Marcia ; that she had immediately called to her aid, and to the participation of her plot, those who participated in her danger ; and that the proximity of their own intended fate had prescribed to them an immediate attempt ; the circumstances of which were these. At mid-day the emperor was accustomed to bathe, and at the same time to take refreshments. On this occasion, Marcia, agreeably to her custom, presented him with a goblet of wine medicated with poison. Of this wine, having just returned from the fatigues of the chase, Commodus drank freely, and almost immediately fell into heavy slumbers ; from which, however, he was soon aroused by deadly sickness. That was a case which the conspirators had not taken into their calculations ; and they now began to fear that the violent vomiting which succeeded might



throw off the poison. There was no time to be lost and the barbarous Marcia, who had so often slept in the arms of the young emperor, was the person to propose that he should now be strangled. A young gladiator, named Narcissus, was therefore introduced into the room; what passed is not known circumstantially: but, as the emperor was young and athletic, though off his guard at the moment, and under the disadvantage of sickness, and as he had himself been regularly trained in the gladiatorial discipline, there can be little doubt that the vile assassin would meet with a desperate resistance. And thus, after all, there is good reason to think that the emperor resigned his life in the character of a dying gladiator.<sup>48</sup>

So perished the eldest and sole surviving son of the great Marcus Antoninus; and the crown passed into the momentary possession of two old men, who reigned in succession each for a few weeks. The first of these was Pertinax, an upright man, a good officer, and an unseasonable reformer; unseasonable for those times, but more so for himself. Lætus, the ringleader in the assassination of Commodus, had been at that time the prætorian prefect — an office which a German writer considers as best represented to modern ideas by the Turkish post of grand vizier. Needing a protector at this moment, he naturally fixed his eyes upon Pertinax — as then holding the powerful command of city prefect (or governor of Rome). Him therefore he recom-

mended to the soldiery — that is, to the prætorian cohorts. The soldiery had no particular objection to the old general, if he and they could agree upon terms; his age being doubtless appreciated as a first-rate recommendation, in a case where it insured a speedy renewal of the lucrative bargain.

The only demur arose with Pertinax himself: he had been leader of the troops in Britain, then superintendent of the police in Rome, thirdly proconsul in Africa, and finally consul and governor of Rome. In these great official stations he stood near enough to the throne to observe the dangers with which it was surrounded; and it is asserted that he declined the offered dignity. But it is added, that, finding the choice allowed him lay between immediate death<sup>49</sup> and acceptance, he closed with the proposals of the prætorian cohorts, at the rate of about ninety-six pounds per man; which largess he paid by bringing to sale the rich furniture of the last emperor. The danger which usually threatened a Roman Cæsar in such cases was — lest he should not be able to fulfil his contract. But in the case of Pertinax the danger began from the moment when he *had* fulfilled it. Conceiving himself to be now released from his dependency, he commenced his reforms, civil as well as military, with a zeal which alarmed all those who had an interest in maintaining the old abuses. To two great factions he thus made himself especially obnoxious — to the præ-

torian cohorts, and to the courtiers under the last reign. The connecting link between these two parties was Lætus, who belonged personally to the last, and still retained his influence with the first. Possibly his fears were alarmed; but, at all events, his cupidity was not satisfied. He conceived himself to have been ill rewarded; and, immediately resorting to the same weapons which he had used against Commodus, he stimulated the prætorian guards to murder the emperor. Three hundred of them pressed into the palace: Pertinax attempted to harangue them, and to vindicate himself; but not being able to obtain a hearing, he folded his robe about his head, called upon Jove the Avenger, and was immediately dispatched.

The throne was again empty after a reign of about eighty days; and now came the memorable scandal of putting up the empire to auction. There were two bidders, Sulpicianus and Didius Julianus. The first, however, at that time governor of Rome, lay under a weight of suspicion, being the father-in-law of Pertinax, and likely enough to exact vengeance for his murder. He was besides outbid by Julianus. Sulpician offered about one hundred and sixty pounds a man to the guards; his rival offered two hundred, and assured them besides of immediate payment; 'for,' said he, 'I have the money at home, without needing to raise it from the possessions of the crown.' Upon this the empire was knocked down to the

highest bidder. So shocking, however, was this arrangement to the Roman pride, that the guards durst not leave their new creation without military protection. The resentment of an unarmed mob, however, soon ceased to be of foremost importance ; this resentment extended rapidly to all the frontiers of the empire, where the armies felt that the prætorian cohorts had no exclusive title to give away the throne, and their leaders felt, that, in a contest of this nature, their own claims were incomparably superior to those of the present occupant. Three great candidates therefore started forward — Septimius Severus, who commanded the armies in Illyria, Pescennius Niger in Syria, and Albinus in Britain. Severus, as the nearest to Rome, marched and possessed himself of that city. Vengeance followed upon all parties concerned in the late murder. Julianus, unable to complete his bargain, had already been put to death, as a deprecatory offering to the approaching army. Severus himself inflicted death upon Lætus, and dismissed the prætorian cohorts. Thence marching against his Syrian rival, Niger, who had formerly been his friend, and who was not wanting in military skill, he overthrew him in three great battles. Niger fled to Antioch, the seat of his late government, and was there decapitated. Meantime Albinus, the British commander-in-chief, had already been won over by the title of Cæsar, or adopted heir to the new Augustus. But the hollowness of this bribe

soon became apparent, and the two competitors met to decide their pretensions at Lyons. In the great battle which followed, Severus fell from his horse, and was at first supposed to be dead. But recovering, he defeated his rival, who immediately committed suicide. Severus displayed his ferocious temper sufficiently by sending the head of Albinus to Rome. Other expressions of his natural character soon followed : he suspected strongly that Albinus had been favored by the senate ; forty of that body, with their wives and children, were immediately sacrificed to his wrath : but he never forgave the rest, nor endured to live upon terms of amity amongst them. Quitting Rome in disgust, he employed himself first in making war upon the Parthians, who had naturally, from situation, befriended his Syrian rival. Their capital cities he overthrew ; and afterwards, by way of employing his armies, made war in Britain. At the city of York he died ; and to his two sons, Geta and Caracalla, he bequeathed, as his dying advice, a maxim of policy, which sufficiently indicates the situation of the empire at that period ; it was this — ‘ To enrich the soldiery at any price, and to regard the rest of their subjects as so many ciphers.’ But, as a critical historian remarks, this was a short-sighted and self-destroying policy ; since in no way is the subsistence of the soldier made more insecure, than by diminishing the general security of rights and property to those who are not soldiers, from whom,

after all, the funds must be sought, by which the soldier himself is to be paid and nourished. The two sons of Severus, whose bitter enmity is so memorably put on record by their actions, travelled simultaneously to Rome; but so mistrustful of each other, that at every stage the two princes took up their quarters at different houses. Geta has obtained the sympathy of historians, because he happened to be the victim; but there is reason to think, that each of the brothers was conspiring against the other. The weak credulity, rather than the conscious innocence, of Geta, led to the catastrophe; he presented himself at a meeting with his brother in the presence of their common mother, and was murdered by Caracalla in his mother's arms. He was, however, avenged; the horrors of that tragedy, and remorse for the twenty thousand murders which had followed, never forsook the guilty Caracalla. Quitting Rome, but pursued into every region by the bloody image of his brother, the emperor henceforward led a wandering life at the head of his legions; but never was there a better illustration of the poet's maxim that

‘Remorse is as the mind in which it grows :

If *that* be gentle,’ &c.

For the remorse of Caracalla put on no shape of repentance. On the contrary, he carried anger and oppression wherever he moved; and protected himself from plots only by living in the very centre of a

nomadic camp. Six years had passed away in this manner, when a mere accident led to his assassination. For the sake of security, the office of prætorian prefect had been divided between two commissioners, one for military affairs, the other for civil. The latter of these two officers was Opilius Macrinus. This man has, by some historians, been supposed to have harbored no bad intentions; but, unfortunately, an astrologer had foretold that he was destined to the throne. The prophet was laid in irons at Rome, and letters were dispatched to Caracalla, apprising him of the case. These letters, as yet unopened, were transferred by the emperor, then occupied in witnessing a race, to Macrinus, who thus became acquainted with the whole grounds of suspicion against himself, — grounds which, to the jealousy of the emperor, he well knew would appear substantial proofs. Upon this he resolved to anticipate the emperor in the work of murder. The head-quarters were then at Edessa; and upon his instigation, a disappointed centurion, named Martialis, animated also by revenge for the death of his brother, undertook to assassinate Caracalla. An opportunity soon offered, on a visit which the prince made to the celebrated temple of the moon at Carrhæ. The attempt was successful: the emperor perished; but Martialis paid the penalty of his crime in the same hour, being shot by a Scythian archer of the body-guard.

Macrinus, after three days' interregnum, being

elected emperor, began his reign by purchasing a peace from the Parthians. What the empire chiefly needed at this moment, is evident from the next step taken by this emperor. He labored to restore the ancient discipline of the armies in all its rigor. He was aware of the risk he ran in this attempt; and that he *was* so, is the best evidence of the strong necessity which existed for reform. Perhaps, however, he might have surmounted his difficulties and dangers, had he met with no competitor round whose person the military malcontents could rally. But such a competitor soon arose; and, to the astonishment of all the world, in the person of a Syrian. The Emperor Severus, on losing his first wife, had resolved to strengthen the pretensions of his family by a second marriage with some lady having a regal 'genesis,' that is, whose horoscope promised a regal destiny. Julia Domna, a native of Syria, offered him this dowry, and she became the mother of Geta. A sister of this Julia, called Mœsa, had, through two different daughters, two grandsons — Heliogabalus and Alexander Severus. The mutineers of the army rallied around the first of these; a battle was fought; and Macrinus, with his son Diadumenianus, whom he had adopted to the succession, were captured and put to death. Heliogabalus succeeded, and reigned in the monstrous manner which has rendered his name infamous in history. In what way, however, he lost the affections of the army, has never



been explained. His mother, Socæmias, the eldest daughter of Mæsa, had represented herself as the concubine of Caracalla; and Heliogabalus, being thus accredited as the son of that emperor, whose memory was dear to the soldiery, had enjoyed the full benefit of that descent, nor can it be readily explained how he came to lose it.

Here, in fact, we meet with an instance of that dilemma which is so constantly occurring in the history of the Cæsars. If a prince is by temperament disposed to severity of manners, and naturally seeks to impress his own spirit upon the composition and discipline of the army, we are sure to find that he was cut off in his attempts by private assassination or by public rebellion. On the other hand, if he wallows in sensuality, and is careless about all discipline, civil or military, we then find as commonly that he loses the esteem and affections of the army to some rival of severer habits. And in the midst of such oscillations, and with examples of such contradictory interpretation, we cannot wonder that the Roman princes did not oftener take warning by the misfortunes of their predecessors. In the present instance, Alexander, the cousin of Heliogabalus, without intrigues of his own, and simply (as it appears) by the purity and sobriety of his conduct, had alienated the affections of the army from the reigning prince. Either jealousy or prudence had led Heliogabalus to make an attempt upon his

rival's life ; and this attempt had nearly cost him his own through the mutiny which it caused. In a second uproar, produced by some fresh intrigues of the emperor against his cousin, the soldiers became unmanageable, and they refused to pause until they had massacred Heliogabalus, together with his mother, and raised his cousin Alexander to the throne.

The reforms of this prince, who reigned under the name of Alexander Severus, were extensive and searching ; not only in his court, which he purged of all notorious abuses, but throughout the economy of the army. He cashiered, upon one occasion, an entire legion ; he restored, as far as he was able, the ancient discipline ; and, above all, he liberated the provinces from military spoliation. 'Let the soldier,' said he, 'be contented with his pay ; and whatever more he wants, let him obtain it by victory from the enemy, not by pillage from his fellow-subject.' But whatever might be the value or extent of his reforms in the marching regiments, Alexander could not succeed in binding the prætorian guards to his yoke. Under the guardianship of his mother Mammæa, the conduct of state affairs had been submitted to a council of sixteen persons, at the head of which stood the celebrated Ulpian. To this minister the prætorians imputed the reforms, and perhaps the whole spirit of reform ; for they pursued him with a vengeance which is else hardly to be explained. Many days was Ulpian protected by

the citizens of Rome, until the whole city was threatened with conflagration; he then fled to the palace of the young emperor, who in vain attempted to save him from his pursuers under the shelter of the imperial purple. Ulpian was murdered before his eyes; nor was it found possible to punish the ringleader in this foul conspiracy, until he had been removed by something like treachery to a remote government.

Meantime, a great revolution and change of dynasty had been effected in Parthia; the line of the Arsacidæ was terminated; the Parthian empire was at an end; and the sceptre of Persia was restored under the new race of the Sassanides. Artaxerxes, the first prince of this race, sent an embassy of four hundred select knights, enjoining the Roman emperor to content himself with Europe, and to leave Asia to the Persians. In the event of a refusal, the ambassadors were instructed to offer a defiance to the Roman prince. Upon such an insult, Alexander could not do less, with either safety or dignity, than to prepare for war. It is probable, indeed, that, by this expedition, which drew off the minds of the soldiery from brooding upon the reforms which offended them, the life of Alexander was prolonged. But the expedition itself was mismanaged, or was unfortunate. This result, however, does not seem chargeable upon Alexander. All the preparations were admirable on the march, and up to the enemy's frontier. The invasion it was, which, in a strategic

sense, seems to have been ill combined. Three armies were to have entered Persia simultaneously : one of these, which was destined to act on a flank of the general line, entangled itself in the marshy grounds near Babylon, and was cut off by the archery of an enemy whom it could not reach. The other wing, acting upon ground impracticable for the manœuvres of the Persian cavalry, and supported by Chosroes the king of Armenia, gave great trouble to Artaxerxes, and, with adequate support from the other armies, would doubtless have been victorious. But the central army, under the conduct of Alexander in person, discouraged by the destruction of one entire wing, remained stationary in Mesopotamia throughout the summer, and, at the close of the campaign, was withdrawn to Antioch, *re infectâ*. It has been observed that great mystery hangs over the operations and issue of this short war. Thus much, however, is evident, that nothing but the previous exhaustion of the Persian king saved the Roman armies from signal discomfiture ; and even thus there is no ground for claiming a victory (as most historians do) to the Roman arms. Any termination of the Persian war, however, whether glorious or not, was likely to be personally injurious to Alexander, by allowing leisure to the soldiery for recurring to their grievances. Sensible, no doubt, of this, Alexander was gratified by the occasion which then arose for repressing the hostile movements of the

Germans. He led his army off upon this expedition, but their temper was gloomy and threatening; and at length, after reaching the seat of war, at Mentz, an open mutiny broke out under the guidance of Maximin, which terminated in the murder of the emperor and his mother. By Herodian the discontents of the army are referred to the ill management of the Persian campaign, and the unpromising commencement of the new war in Germany. But it seems probable that a dissolute and wicked army, like that of Alexander, had not murmured under the too little, but the too much of military service; not the buying a truce with gold seems to have offended them, but the having led them at all upon an enterprise of danger and hardship.

Maximin succeeded, whose feats of strength, when he first courted the notice of the Emperor Severus, have been described by Gibbon. He was at that period a Thracian peasant; since then he had risen gradually to high offices; but, according to historians, he retained his Thracian brutality to the last. That may have been true; but one remark must be made upon this occasion; Maximin was especially opposed to the senate; and, wherever that was the case, no justice was done to an emperor. Why it was that Maximin would not ask for the confirmation of his election from the senate, has never been explained; it is said that he anticipated a rejection. But, on the other hand, it seems probable that the senate supposed

its sanction to be despised. Nothing, apparently, but this reciprocal reserve in making approaches to each other, was the cause of all the bloodshed which followed. The two Gordians, who commanded in Africa, were set up by the senate against the new emperor; and the consternation of that body must have been great, when these champions were immediately overthrown and killed. They did not, however, despair: substituting the two governors of Rome, Pupienus and Balbinus, and associating to them the younger Gordian, they resolved to make a stand; for the severities of Maximin had by this time manifested that it was a contest of extermination. Meantime, Maximin had broken up from Sirmium, the capital of Pannonia, and had advanced to Aquileia, — that famous fortress, which in every invasion of Italy was the first object of attack. The senate had set a price upon his head; but there was every probability that he would have triumphed, had he not disgusted his army by immoderate severities. It was, however, but reasonable that those, who would not support the strict but equitable discipline of the mild Alexander, should suffer under the barbarous and capricious rigor of Maximin. That rigor was his ruin: sunk and degraded as the senate was, and now but the shadow of a mighty name, it was found on this occasion to have long arms when supported by the frenzy of its opponent. Whatever might be the real weakness of this body, the rude

soldiers yet felt a blind traditionary veneration for its sanction, when prompting them as patriots to an act which their own multiplied provocations had but too much recommended to their passions. A party entered the tent of Maximin, and dispatched him with the same un pitying haste which he had shown under similar circumstances to the gentle-minded Alexander. Aquileia opened her gates immediately, and thus made it evident that the war had been personal to Maximin.

A scene followed within a short time which is in the highest degree interesting. The senate, in creating two emperors at once (for the boy Gordian was probably associated to them only by way of masking their experiment), had made it evident that their purpose was to restore the republic and its two consuls. This was their meaning; and the experiment had now been twice repeated. The army saw through it; as to the double number of emperors, *that* was of little consequence, farther than as it expressed their intention, viz. by bringing back the consular government, to restore the power of the senate, and to abrogate that of the army. The prætorian troops, who were the most deeply interested in preventing this revolution, watched their opportunity, and attacked the two emperors in the palace. The deadly feud, which had already arisen between them, led each to suppose himself under assault from the other. The mistake was not of long duration. Carried into the streets of Rome, they were

both put to death, and treated with monstrous indignities. The young Gordian was adopted by the soldiery. It seems odd that even thus far the guards should sanction the choice of the senate, having the purposes which they had ; but perhaps Gordian had recommended himself to their favor in a degree which might outweigh what they considered the original vice of his appointment, and his youth promised them an immediate impunity. This prince, however, like so many of his predecessors soon came to an unhappy end. Under the guardianship of the upright Misis, for a time he prospered ; and preparations were made upon a great scale for the energetic administration of a Persian war. But Misis died, perhaps by poison, in the course of the campaign ; and to him succeeded, as prætorian prefect, an Arabian officer, called Philip. The innocent boy, left without friends, was soon removed by murder ; and a monument was afterwards erected to his memory, at the junction of the Aboras and the Euphrates. Great obscurity, however, clouds this part of history ; nor is it so much as known in what way the Persian war was conducted or terminated.

Philip, having made himself emperor, celebrated, upon his arrival in Rome, the secular games, in the year 247 of the Christian era — that being the completion of a thousand years from the foundation of Rome. But Nemesis was already on his steps. An insurrec-



tion had broken out amongst the legions stationed in Mœsia ; and they had raised to the purple some officer of low rank. Philip, having occasion to notice this affair in the senate, received for answer from Decius, that probably, the pseudo-imperator would prove a mere evanescent phantom. This conjecture was confirmed ; and Philip in consequence conceived a high opinion of Decius, whom (as the insurrection still continued) he judged to be the fittest man for appeasing it. Decius accordingly went, armed with the proper authority. But on his arrival, he found himself compelled by the insurgent army to choose between empire and death. Thus constrained, he yielded to the wishes of the troops ; and then hastening with a veteran army into Italy, he fought the battle of Verona, where Philip was defeated and killed, whilst the son of Philip was murdered at Rome by the prætorian guards.

With Philip, ends, according to our distribution, the second series of the Cæsars, comprehending Commodus, Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Septimius, Severus, Caracalla and Geta, Macrinus, Heliogabalus, Alexander Severus, Maximin, the two Gordians, Pupienus and Balbinus, the third Gordian, and Philip the Arab.

In looking back at this series of Cæsars, we are horror-struck at the blood-stained picture. Well might a foreign writer, in reviewing the same succession,

declare, that it is like passing into a new world when the transition is made from this chapter of the human history to that of modern Europe. From Commodus to Decius are sixteen names, which, spread through a space of fifty-nine years, assign to each Cæsar a reign of less than four years. And Casaubon remarks, that, in one period of 160 years, there were seventy persons who assumed the Roman purple; which gives to each not much more than two years. On the other hand, in the history of France, we find that, through a period of 1200 years, there have been no more than sixty-four kings: upon an average, therefore, each king appears to have enjoyed a reign of nearly nineteen years. This vast difference in security is due to two great principles,—that of primogeniture as between son and son, and of hereditary succession as between a son and every other pretender. Well may we hail the principle of hereditary right as realizing the praise of Burke applied to chivalry, viz., that it is ‘the cheap defence of nations;’ for the security which is thus obtained, be it recollected, does not regard a small succession of princes, but the whole rights and interests of social man: since the contests for the rights of belligerent rivals do not respect themselves only, but very often spread ruin and proscription amongst all orders of men. The principle of hereditary succession, says one writer, had it been a discovery of any one individual, would deserve to be

considered as the very greatest ever made; and he adds acutely, in answer to the obvious, but shallow objection to it (viz., its apparent assumption of equal ability for reigning in father and son for ever), that it is like the Copernican system of the heavenly bodies, — contradictory to our sense and first impressions, but true notwithstanding.

## CHAPTER VI.

TO return, however, to our sketch of the Cæsars. At the head of the third series we place Decius. He came to the throne at a moment of great public embarrassment. The Goths were now beginning to press southwards upon the empire. Dacia they had ravaged for some time; 'and here,' says a German writer, 'observe the short-sightedness of the Emperor Trajan. Had he left the Dacians in possession of their independence, they would, under their native kings, have made head against the Goths. But, being compelled to assume the character of Roman citizens, they had lost their warlike qualities.' From Dacia the Goths had descended upon Mœsia; and, passing the Danube, they laid siege to Marcianopolis, a city built by Trajan in honor of his sister. The inhabitants paid a heavy ransom for their town; and the Goths were persuaded for the present to return home. But sooner than was expected, they returned to Mœsia, under their king, Kniva; and they were already engaged in the siege of Nicopolis, when Decius came in sight at the head of the Roman army. The Goths retired, but it was to Thrace; and, in the conquest of Philippopolis, they found an ample indemnity for their forced retreat and

disappointment. Decius pursued, but the king of the Goths turned suddenly upon him ; the emperor was obliged to fly ; the Roman camp was plundered ; Philippopolis was taken by storm ; and its whole population, reputed at more than a hundred thousand souls, destroyed.

Such was the first great irruption of the barbarians into the Roman territory : and panic was diffused on the wings of the wind over the whole empire. Decius, however, was firm, and made prodigious efforts to restore the balance of power to its ancient condition. For the moment he had some partial successes. He cut off several detachments of Goths, on their road to reinforce the enemy ; and he strengthened the fortresses and garrisons of the Danube. But his last success was the means of his total ruin. He came up with the Goths at Forum Terebronii, and, having surrounded their position, their destruction seemed inevitable. A great battle ensued, and a mighty victory to the Goths. Nothing is now known of the circumstances, except that the third line of the Romans was entangled inextricably in a morass (as had happened in the Persian expedition of Alexander). Decius perished on this occasion — nor was it possible to find his dead body. This great defeat naturally raised the authority of the senate, in the same proportion as it depressed that of the army ; and by the will of that body, Hostilianus, a son of Decius, was raised to the

empire ; and ostensibly on account of his youth, but really with a view to their standing policy of restoring the consulate, and the whole machinery of the republic, Gallus, an experienced commander, was associated in the empire. But no skill or experience could avail to retrieve the sinking power of Rome upon the Illyrian frontier. The Roman army was disorganized, panic-stricken, reduced to skeleton battalions. Without an army, what could be done ? And thus it may really have been no blame to Gallus, that he made a treaty with the Goths more degrading than any previous act in the long annals of Rome. By the terms of this infamous bargain, they were allowed to carry off an immense booty, amongst which was a long roll of distinguished prisoners ; and Cæsar himself it was — not any lieutenant or agent that might have been afterwards disavowed — who volunteered to purchase their future absence by an annual tribute. The very army which had brought their emperor into the necessity of submitting to such abject concessions, were the first to be offended with this natural result of their own failures. Gallus was already ruined in public opinion, when further accumulations arose to his disgrace. It was now supposed to have been discovered, that the late dreadful defeat of Forum Terebronii was due to his bad advice ; and, as the young Hostilianus happened to die about this time of a contagious disorder, Gallus was charged with his murder. Even a ray of prosperity

which just now gleamed upon the Roman arms, aggravated the disgrace of Gallus, and was instantly made the handle of his ruin. Æmilianus, the governor of Mœsia and Pannonia, inflicted some check or defeat upon the Goths ; and in the enthusiasm of sudden pride, upon an occasion which contrasted so advantageously for himself with the military conduct of Decius and Gallus, the soldiers of his own legion raised Æmilianus to the purple. No time was to be lost. Summoned by the troops, Æmilianus marched into Italy ; and no sooner had he made his appearance there, than the prætorian guards murdered the Emperor Gallus and his son Volusianus, by way of confirming the election of Æmilianus. The new emperor offered to secure the frontiers, both in the east and on the Danube, from the incursions of the barbarians. This offer may be regarded as thrown out for the conciliation of all classes in the empire. But to the senate in particular he addressed a message, which forcibly illustrates the political position of that body in those times. Æmilianus proposed to resign the whole civil administration into the hands of the senate, reserving to himself the only unenviable burthen of the military interests. His hope was, that in this way making himself in part the creation of the senate, he might strengthen his title against competitors at Rome, whilst the entire military administration going on under his own eyes, exclusively directed to that one object, would give him some chance

of defeating the hasty and tumultuary competitions so apt to arise amongst the legions upon the frontier. We notice the transaction chiefly as indicating the anomalous situation of the senate. Without power in a proper sense, or no more, however, than the indirect power of wealth, that ancient body retained an immense *auctoritas* — that is, an influence built upon ancient reputation, which, in their case, had the strength of a religious superstition in all Italian minds. This influence the senators exerted with effect, whenever the course of events had happened to reduce the power of the army. And never did they make a more continuous and sustained effort for retrieving their ancient power and place, together with the whole system of the republic, than during the period at which we are now arrived. From the time of Maximin, in fact, to the accession of Aurelian, the senate perpetually interposed their credit and authority, like some *Deus ex machinâ* in the dramatic art. And if this one fact were all that had survived of the public annals at this period, we might sufficiently collect the situation of the two other parties in the empire — the army and the emperor; the weakness and precarious tenure of the one, and the anarchy of the other. And hence it is that we can explain the hatred borne to the senate by vigorous emperors, such as Aurelian, succeeding to a long course of weak and troubled reigns. Such an emperor presumed in the senate, and not without



reason, the same spirit of domineering interference as ready to manifest itself, upon any opportunity offered, against himself, which, in his earlier days, he had witnessed so repeatedly in successful operation upon the fates and prospects of others.

The situation indeed of the world — that is to say, of that great centre of civilization, which, running round the Mediterranean in one continuous belt of great breadth, still composed the Roman Empire, was at this time most profoundly interesting. The crisis had arrived. In the East, a new dynasty (the Sassanides) had remoulded ancient elements into a new form, and breathed a new life into an empire, which else was gradually becoming crazy of age, and which, at any rate, by losing its unity, must have lost its vigor as an offensive power. Parthia was languishing and drooping as an anti-Roman state, when the last of the Arsacidæ expired. A perfect *Palingenesis* was wrought by the restorer of the Persian empire, which pretty nearly re-occupied (and gloried in re-occupying) the very area that had once composed the empire of Cyrus. Even this *Palingenesis* might have terminated in a divided empire: vigor might have been restored, but in the shape of a polyarchy (such as the Saxons established in England), rather than a monarchy; and in reality, at one moment that appeared to be a probable event. Now, had this been the course of the revolution, an alliance with one of these kingdoms would

have tended to balance the hostility of another (as was in fact the case when Alexander Severus saved himself from the Persian power by a momentary alliance with Armenia). But all the elements of disorder had in that quarter re-combined themselves into severe unity: and thus was Rome, upon her eastern frontier, laid open to a new power of juvenile activity and vigor, just at the period when the languor of the decaying Parthian had allowed the Roman discipline to fall into a corresponding declension. Such was the condition of Rome upon her oriental frontier.<sup>50</sup> On the northern, it was much worse. Precisely at the crisis of a great revolution in Asia, which demanded in that quarter more than the total strength of the empire, and threatened to demand it for ages to come, did the Goths, under their earliest denomination of *Getae*, with many other associate tribes, begin to push with their horns against the northern gates of the empire; the whole line of the Danube, and, pretty nearly about the same time, of the Rhine, (upon which the tribes from Swabia, Bavaria, and Franconia, were beginning to descend,) now became insecure; and these two rivers ceased in effect to be the barriers of Rome. Taking a middle point of time between the Parthian revolution and the fatal overthrow of Forum Terebronii, we may fix upon the reign of Philip the Arab [who naturalized himself in Rome by the appellation of Marcus Julius] as the epoch from which the Roman

empire, already sapped and undermined by changes from within, began to give way, and to dilapidate from without. And this reign dates itself in the series by those ever-memorable secular or jubilee games, which celebrated the completion of the thousandth year from the foundation of Rome.<sup>51</sup>

Resuming our sketch of the Imperial history, we may remark the natural embarrassment which must have possessed the senate, when two candidates for the purple were equally earnest in appealing to *them*, and their deliberate choice, as the best foundation for a valid election. Scarcely had the ground been cleared for Æmilianus by the murder of Gallus and his son, when Valerian, a Roman senator, of such eminent merit, and confessedly so much the foremost noble in all the qualities essential to the very delicate and comprehensive functions of a Censor,<sup>52</sup> that Decius had revived that office expressly in his behalf, entered Italy at the head of the army from Gaul. He had been summoned to his aid by the late emperor, Gallus; but arriving too late for his support, he determined to avenge him. Both Æmilianus and Valerian recognized the authority of the senate, and professed to act under that sanction; but it was the soldiery who cut the knot, as usual, by the sword. Æmilianus was encamped at Spoleto; but as the enemy drew near, his soldiers, shrinking no doubt from a contest with veteran troops, made their peace by murdering the new emperor, and

Valerian was elected in his stead. The prince was already an old man at the time of his election ; but he lived long enough to look back upon the day of his inauguration as the blackest in his life. Memorable were the calamities which fell upon himself, and upon the empire, during his reign. He began by associating to himself his son Gallienus ; partly, perhaps, for his own relief, partly to indulge the senate in their steady plan of dividing the imperial authority. The two emperors undertook the military defence of the empire, Gallienus proceeding to the German frontier, Valerian to the eastern. Under Gallienus, the Franks began first to make themselves heard of. Breaking into Gaul, they passed through that country and Spain ; captured Tarragona in their route ; crossed over to Africa, and conquered Mauritania. At the same time, the Alemanni, who had been in motion since the time of Caracalla, broke into Lombardy, across the Rhætian Alps. The senate, left without aid from either emperors, were obliged to make preparations for the common defence against this host of barbarians. Luckily, the very magnitude of the enemy's success, by overloading him with booty, made it his interest to retire without fighting ; and the degraded senate, hanging upon the traces of their retiring footsteps, without fighting, or daring to fight, claimed the honors of a victory. Even then, however, they did more than was agreeable to the jealousies of Gallienus, who, by an edict, publicly

rebuked their presumption, and forbade them in future to appear amongst the legions, or to exercise any military functions. He himself, meanwhile, could devise no better way of providing for the public security, than by marrying the daughter of his chief enemy, the king of the Marcomanni. On this side of Europe, the barbarians were thus quieted for the present ; but the Goths of the Ukraine, in three marauding expeditions of unprecedented violence, ravaged the wealthy regions of Asia Minor, as well as the islands of the Archipelago : and at length, under the guidance of deserters, landed in the port of the Pyræus. Advancing from this point, after sacking Athens and the chief cities of Greece, they marched upon Epirus, and began to threaten Italy. But the defection at this crisis of a conspicuous chieftain, and the burden of their booty, made these wild marauders anxious to provide for a safe retreat ; the imperial commanders in Mœsia listened eagerly to their offers : and it set the seal to the dishonors of the State, that, after having traversed so vast a range of territory almost without resistance, these blood-stained brigands were now suffered to retire under the very guardianship of those whom they had just visited with military execution.

Such were the terms upon which the Emperor Gallienus purchased a brief respite from his haughty enemies. For the moment, however, he *did* enjoy security. Far otherwise was the destiny of his un-

happy father. Sapor now ruled in Persia ; the throne of Armenia had vainly striven to maintain its independency against his armies, and the daggers of his hired assassins. This revolution, which so much enfeebled the Roman means of war, exactly in that proportion increased the necessity for it. War, and that instantly, seemed to offer the only chance for maintaining the Roman name or existence in Asia. Carrhæ and Nisibis, the two potent fortresses in Mesopotamia, had fallen ; and the Persian arms were now triumphant on both banks of the Euphrates. Valerian was not of a character to look with indifference upon such a scene, terminated by such a prospect ; prudence and temerity, fear and confidence, all spoke a common language in this great emergency ; and Valerian marched towards the Euphrates with a fixed purpose of driving the enemy beyond that river. By whose mismanagement the records of history do not enable us to say, some think of Macrianus, the prætorian prefect, some of Valerian himself, but doubtless by the treachery of guides co-operating with errors in the general, the Roman army was entangled in marshy grounds ; partial actions followed and skirmishes of cavalry, in which the Romans became direfully aware of their situation ; retreat was cut off, to advance was impossible ; and to fight was now found to be without hope. In these circumstances, they offered to capitulate. But the haughty Sapor would hear of nothing

but unconditional surrender; and to that course the unhappy emperor submitted. Various traditions<sup>53</sup> have been preserved by history concerning the fate of Valerian; all agree that he died in misery and captivity; but some have circumstantiated this general statement by features of excessive misery and degradation, which possibly were added afterwards by scenical romancers, in order to heighten the interest of the tale, or by ethical writers, in order to point and strengthen the moral. Gallienus now ruled alone, except as regarded the restless efforts of insurgents, thirty of whom are said to have arisen in his single reign. This, however, is probably an exaggeration. Nineteen such rebels are mentioned by name: of whom the chief were Calpurnius Piso, a Roman senator; Tetricus, a man of rank who claimed a descent from Pompey, Crassus, and even from Numa Pompilius, and maintained himself some time in Gaul and Spain; Trebellianus, who founded a republic of robbers in Isauria which survived himself by centuries; and Odenathus, the Syrian. Others were mere *Terræ filii*, or adventurers, who flourished and decayed in a few days or weeks, of whom the most remarkable was a working armorer named Marius. Not one of the whole number eventually prospered, except Odenathus; and he, though originally a rebel, yet, in consideration of services performed against Persia, was suffered to retain his power, and to transmit his kingdom of Palmyra to his

widow Zenobia. He was even complimented with the title of Augustus. All the rest perished. Their rise, however, and local prosperity at so many different points of the empire, showed the distracted condition of the State, and its internal weakness. That again proclaimed its external peril. No other cause had called forth this diffusive spirit of insurrection than the general consciousness, so fatally warranted, of the debility which had emasculated the government, and its incompetency to deal vigorously with the public enemies.<sup>54</sup> The very granaries of Rome, Sicily and Egypt, were the seats of continued distractions; in Alexandria, the second city of the empire, there was even a civil war which lasted for twelve years. Weakness, dissension and misery, were spread like a cloud over the whole face of the empire.

The last of the rebels who directed his rebellion personally against Gallienus was Aureolus. Passing the Rhaetian Alps, this leader sought out and defied the emperor. He was defeated, and retreated upon Milan; but Gallienus, in pursuing him, was lured into an ambuscade, and perished from the wound inflicted by an archer. With his dying breath he is said to have recommended Claudius to the favor of the senate; and at all events Claudius it was who succeeded. Scarcely was the new emperor installed, before he was summoned to a trial not only arduous in itself, but terrific by the very name of the enemy. The Goths of the



Ukraine, in a new armament of six thousand vessels, had again descended by the Bosphorus into the south, and had sat down before Thessalonica, the capital of Macedonia. Claudius marched against them with the determination to vindicate the Roman name and honor: 'Know,' said he, writing to the senate, 'that 320,000 Goths have set foot upon the Roman soil. Should I conquer them, your gratitude will be my reward. Should I fall, do not forget who it is that I have succeeded; and that the republic is exhausted.' No sooner did the Goths hear of his approach, than, with transports of ferocious joy, they gave up the siege, and hurried to annihilate the last pillar of the empire. The mighty battle which ensued, neither party seeking to evade it, took place at Naissus. At one time the legions were giving way, when suddenly, by some happy manœuvre of the emperor, a Roman corps found its way to the rear of the enemy. The Goths gave way, and their defeat was total. According to most accounts they left 50,000 dead upon the field. The campaign still lingered, however, at other points, until at last the emperor succeeded in driving back the relics of the Gothic host into the fastnesses of the Balkan; and there the greater part of them died of hunger and pestilence. These great services performed, within two years from his accession to the throne, by the rarest of fates, the Emperor Claudius died in his bed at Sirmium, the capital of Pannonia. His brother

Quintilius, who had a great command at Aquileia, immediately resumed the purple ; but his usurpation lasted only seventeen days, for the last emperor, with a single eye to the public good, had recommended Aurelian as his successor, guided by his personal knowledge of that general's strategic qualities. The army of the Danube confirmed the appointment ; and Quintilius committed suicide. Aurelian was of the same harsh and forbidding character as the Emperor Severus : he had, however, the qualities demanded by the times ; energetic and not amiable princes were required by the exigencies of the state. The hydra-headed Goths were again in the field on the Illyrian quarter : Italy itself was invaded by the Alemanni ; and Tetricus, the rebel, still survived as a monument of the weakness of Gallienus. All these enemies were speedily repressed, or vanquished, by Aurelian. But it marks the real declension of the empire, a declension which no personal vigor in the emperor was now sufficient to disguise, that, even in the midst of victory, Aurelian found it necessary to make a formal surrender, by treaty, of that Dacia which Trajan had united with so much ostentation to the empire. Europe was now again in repose ; and Aurelian found himself at liberty to apply his powers as a re-organizer and restorer to the East. In that quarter of the world a marvellous revolution had occurred. The little oasis of Palmyra, from a Roman colony, had grown into the leading

province of a great empire. This island of the desert, together with Syria and Egypt, formed an independent monarchy under the sceptre of Zenobia.<sup>55</sup> After two battles lost in Syria, Zenobia retreated to Palmyra. With great difficulty Aurelian pursued her; and with still greater difficulty he pressed the siege of Palmyra. Zenobia looked for relief from Persia; but at that moment Sapor died, and the Queen of Palmyra fled upon a dromedary, but was pursued and captured. Palmyra surrendered and was spared; but unfortunately, with a folly which marks the haughty spirit of the place unfitted to brook submission, scarcely had the conquering army retired when a tumult arose, and the Roman garrison was slaughtered. Little knowledge could those have had of Aurelian's character, who tempted him to acts but too welcome to his cruel nature by such an outrage as this. The news overtook the emperor on the Hellespont. Instantly, without pause, 'like Até hot from hell,' Aurelian retraced his steps — reached the guilty city — and consigned it, with all its population, to that utter destruction from which it has never since risen. The energetic administration of Aurelian had now restored the empire — not to its lost vigor, that was impossible — but to a condition of repose. That was a condition more agreeable to the empire than to the emperor. Peace was hateful to Aurelian; and he sought for war, where it could seldom be sought in vain, upon the Persian

frontier. But he was not destined to reach the Euphrates; and it is worthy of notice, as a providential ordinance, that his own unmerciful nature was the ultimate cause of his fate. Anticipating the emperor's severity in punishing some errors of his own, Mucassor, a general officer, in whom Aurelian placed especial confidence, assassinated him between Byzantium and Heraclea. An interregnum of eight months succeeded, during which there occurred a contest of a memorable nature. Some historians have described it as strange and surprising. To us, on the contrary, it seems that no contest could be more natural. Heretofore the great strife had been in what way to secure the reversion or possession of that great dignity; whereas now the rivalry lay in declining it. But surely such a competition had in it, under the circumstances of the empire, little that can justly surprise us. Always a post of danger, and so regularly closed by assassination, that in a course of two centuries there are hardly to be found three or four cases of exception, the imperial dignity had now become burdened with a public responsibility which exacted great military talents, and imposed a perpetual and personal activity. Formerly, if the emperor knew himself to be surrounded with assassins, he might at least make his throne, so long as he enjoyed it, the couch of a voluptuary. The '*ave imperator!*' was then the summons, if to the supremacy in passive danger, so

also to the supremacy in power, and honor, and enjoyment. But now it was a summons to never-ending tumults and alarms; an injunction to that sort of vigilance without intermission, which, even from the poor sentinel, is exacted only when on duty. Not Rome, but the frontier; not the *aurea domus*, but a camp, was the imperial residence. Power and rank, whilst in that residence, could be had in no larger measure by Cæsar *as* Cæsar, than by the same individual as a military commander-in-chief; and, as to enjoyment, *that* for the Roman imperator was now extinct. Rest there could be none for him. Battle was the tenure by which he held his office; and beyond the range of his trumpet's blare, his sceptre was a broken reed. The office of Cæsar at this time resembled the situation (as it is sometimes described in romances) of a knight who had achieved the favor of some capricious lady, with the present possession of her castle and ample domains, but which he holds under the known and accepted condition of meeting all challenges whatsoever offered at the gate by wandering strangers, and also of jousting at any moment with each and all amongst the inmates of the castle, as often as a wish may arise to benefit by the chances in disputing his supremacy.

It is a circumstance, moreover, to be noticed in the aspect of the Roman monarchy at this period, that the pressure of the evils we are now considering, applied

to this particular age of the empire beyond all others, as being an age of transition from a greater to an inferior power. Had the power been either greater or conspicuously less, in that proportion would the pressure have been easier, or none at all. Being greater, for example, the danger would have been repelled to a distance so great that mere remoteness would have disarmed its terrors, or otherwise it would have been violently overawed. Being less, on the other hand, and less in an eminent degree, it would have disposed all parties, as it did at an after period, to regular and formal compromises in the shape of fixed annual tributes. At present the policy of the barbarians along the vast line of the northern frontier, was, to tease and irritate the provinces which they were not entirely able, or prudentially unwilling, to dismember. Yet, as the almost annual irruptions were at every instant ready to be converted into *coup-de-mains* upon Aquileia — upon Verona — or even upon Rome itself, unless vigorously curbed at the outset, — each emperor at this period found himself under the necessity of standing in the attitude of a champion or *propugnator* on the frontier line of his territory — ready for all comers — and with a pretty certain prospect of having one pitched battle at the least to fight in every successive summer. There were nations abroad at this epoch in Europe who did not migrate occasionally, or occasionally project themselves upon the civilized portion of the globe,

but who made it their steady regular occupation to do so, and lived for no other purpose. For seven hundred years the Roman Republic might be styled a republic militant; for about one century further it was an empire triumphant; and now, long retrograde, it had reached that point at which again, but in a different sense, it might be styled an empire militant. Originally it had militated for glory and power; now its militancy was for mere existence. War was again the trade of Rome, as it had been once before; but in that earlier period war had been its highest glory; now it was its dire necessity.

Under this analysis of the Roman condition, need we wonder, with the crowd of unreflecting historians, that the senate, at the era of Aurelian's death, should dispute amongst each other—not as once, for the possession of the sacred purple, but for the luxury and safety of declining it? The sad pre-eminence was finally imposed upon Tacitus, a senator who traced his descent from the historian of that name, who had reached an age of seventy-five years, and who possessed a fortune of three millions sterling. Vainly did the agitated old senator open his lips to decline the perilous honor; five hundred voices insisted upon the necessity of his compliance; and thus, as a foreign writer observes, was the descendant of him, whose glory it had been to signalize himself as the hater of despotism, under the absolute necessity of becoming in his own person, a despot.

The aged senator then was compelled to be emperor, and forced, in spite of his vehement reluctance, to quit the comforts of a palace, which he was never to revisit, for the hardships of a distant camp. His first act was strikingly illustrative of the Roman condition, as we have just described it. Aurelian had attempted to disarm one set of enemies by turning the current of their fury upon another. The Alani were in search of plunder, and strongly disposed to obtain it from Roman provinces. ‘But no,’ said Aurelian; ‘if you do that I shall unchain my legions upon you. Be better advised: keep those excellent dispositions of mind, and that admirable taste for plunder, until you come whither I will conduct you. Then discharge your fury and welcome; besides which, I will pay you wages for your immediate abstinence; and on the other side the Euphrates you shall pay yourselves.’ Such was the outline of the contract; and the Alani had accordingly held themselves in readiness to accompany Aurelian from Europe to his meditated Persian campaign. Meantime, that emperor had perished by treason; and the Alani were still waiting for his successor on the throne to complete his engagements with themselves, as being of necessity the successor also to his wars and to his responsibilities. It happened, from the state of the empire, as we have sketched it above, that Tacitus really *did* succeed to the military plans of Aurelian. The Persian expedition was or-



daigned to go forward ; and Tacitus began, as a preliminary step in that expedition, to look about for his good allies the barbarians. Where might they be, and how employed ? Naturally, they had long been weary of waiting. The Persian booty might be good after *its* kind ; but it was far away ; and, *en attendant*, Roman booty was doubtless good after *its* kind. And so, throughout the provinces of Cappadocia, Pontus, &c., as far as the eye could stretch, nothing was to be seen but cities and villages in flames. The Roman army hungered and thirsted to be unmuzzled and slipped upon these false friends. But this, for the present, Tacitus would not allow. He began by punctually fulfilling all the terms of Aurelian's contract, — a measure which barbarians inevitably construed into the language of fear. But then came the retribution. Having satisfied public justice, the emperor now thought of vengeance ; he unchained his legions : a brief space of time sufficed for a long course of vengeance : and through every outlet of Asia Minor the Alani fled from the wrath of the Roman soldier. Here, however, terminated the military labors of Tacitus : he died at Tyana in Cappadocia, as some say, from the effects of the climate of the Caucasus, co-operating with irritations from the insolence of the soldiery : but, as Zosimus and Zonaras expressly assure us, under the murderous hands of his own troops. His brother Florianus at first usurped the purple, by the aid of the

Illyrian army ; but the choice of other armies, afterwards confirmed by the senate, settled upon Probus, a general already celebrated under Aurelian. The two competitors drew near to each other for the usual decision by the sword, when the dastardly supporters of Florian offered up their chosen prince as a sacrifice to his antagonist. Probus, settled in his seat, addressed himself to the regular business of those times, — to the reduction of insurgent provinces, and the liberation of others from hostile molestations. Isauria and Egypt he visited in the character of a conqueror, Gaul in the character of a deliverer. From the Gaulish provinces he chased in succession the Franks, the Burgundians, and the Lygians. He pursued the intruders far into their German thickets ; and nine of the native German princes came spontaneously into his camp, subscribed such conditions as he thought fit to dictate, and complied with his requisitions of tribute in horses and provisions. This, however, is a delusive gleam of Roman energy, little corresponding with the true condition of the Roman power, and entirely due to the *personal* qualities of Probus. Probus himself showed his sense of the true state of affairs, by carrying a stone wall, of considerable height, from the Danube to the Neckar. He made various attempts also to effect a better distribution of barbarous tribes, by dislocating their settlements ; and making extensive translations of their clans, according to the circumstances of those times. These

arrangements, however, suggested often by short-sighted views, and carried into effect by mere violence, were sometimes defeated visibly at the time, and, doubtless, in very few cases accomplished the ends proposed. In one instance, where a party of Franks had been transported into the Asiatic province of Pontus, as a column of defence against the intrusive Alani, being determined to revisit their own country, they swam the Hellespont, landed on the coasts of Asia Minor and of Greece, plundered Syracuse, steered for the Straits of Gibraltar, sailed along the shores of Spain and Gaul, passing finally through the English Channel and the German Ocean, right onwards to the Frisic and Batavian coasts, where they exultingly rejoined their exulting friends. Meantime, all the energy and military skill of Probus could not save him from the competition of various rivals. Indeed, it must then have been felt, as by us who look back on those times it is now felt, that, amidst so continued a series of brief reigns, interrupted by murders, scarcely an idea could arise answering to our modern ideas of treason and usurpation. For the ideas of fealty and allegiance, as to a sacred and anointed monarch, could have no time to take root. Candidates for the purple must have been viewed rather as military rivals than as traitors to the reigning Cæsar. And hence the reason for the right resistance which was often experienced by the seducers of armies. Probus, however, as acci-

dent in his case ordered it, subdued all his personal opponents, — Saturninus in the East, Proculus and Bonoses in Gaul. For these victories he triumphed in the year 281. But his last hour was even then at hand. One point of his military discipline, which he brought back from elder days, was, to suffer no idleness in his camps. He it was who, by military labor, transferred to Gaul and to Hungary the Italian vine, to the great indignation of the Italian monopolist. The culture of vineyards, the laying of military roads, the draining of marshes, and similar labors, perpetually employed the hands of his stubborn and contumacious troops. On some work of this nature the army happened to be employed near Sirmium, and Probus was looking on from a tower, when a sudden frenzy of disobedience seized upon the men: a party of the mutineers ran up to the emperor, and with a hundred wounds laid him instantly dead. We are told by some writers that the army was immediately seized with remorse for its own act; which, if truly reported, rather tends to confirm the image, otherwise impressed upon us of the relations between the army and Cæsar, as pretty closely corresponding with those between some fierce wild beast and its keeper; the keeper, if not uniformly vigilant as an argus, is continually liable to fall a sacrifice to the wild instincts of the brute, mastering at intervals the reverence and fear under which it has been habitually trained. In this case, both the murder-

ing impulse and the remorse seem alike the effects of a brute instinct, and to have arisen under no guidance of rational purpose or reflection. The person who profited by this murder was Carus, the captain of the guard, a man of advanced years, and a soldier, both by experience and by his propensities. He was proclaimed emperor by the army; and on this occasion there was no further reference to the senate, than by a dry statement of the facts for its information. Troubling himself little about the approbation of a body not likely in any way to affect his purposes (which were purely martial, and adapted to the tumultuous state of the empire), Carus made immediate preparations for pursuing the Persian expedition, — so long promised, and so often interrupted. Having provided for the security of the Illyrian frontier by a bloody victory over the Sarmatians, of whom we now hear for the first time, Carus advanced towards the Euphrates; and from the summit of a mountain he pointed the eyes of his eager army upon the rich provinces of the Persian empire. Varanes, the successor of Artaxerxes, vainly endeavored to negotiate a peace. From some unknown cause, the Persian armies were not at this juncture disposable against Carus: it has been conjectured by some writers that they were engaged in an Indian war. Carus, it is certain, met with little resistance. He insisted on having the Roman supremacy acknowledged as a preliminary to any

treaty; and, having threatened to make Persia as bare as his own skull, he is supposed to have kept his word with regard to Mesopotamia. The great cities of Ctesiphon and Seleucia he took; and vast expectations were formed at Rome of the events which stood next in succession, when, on Christmas day, 283, a sudden and mysterious end overtook Carus and his victorious advance. The story transmitted to Rome was, that a great storm, and a sudden darkness, had surprised the camp of Carus; that the emperor, previously ill, and reposing in his tent, was obscured from sight; that at length a cry had arisen, — ‘The emperor is dead!’ and that, at the same moment, the imperial tent had taken fire. The fire was traced to the confusion of his attendants; and this confusion was imputed by themselves to grief for their master’s death. In all this it is easy to read pretty circumstantially a murder committed on the emperor by corrupted servants, and an attempt afterwards to conceal the indications of murder by the ravages of fire. The report propagated through the army, and at that time received with credit, was, that Carus had been struck by lightning: and that omen, according to the Roman interpretation, implied a necessity of retiring from the expedition. So that, apparently, the whole was a bloody intrigue, set on foot for the purpose of counteracting the emperor’s resolution to prosecute the war. His son Numerian succeeded to the rank of emperor by the choice of the

army. But the mysterious faction of murderers were still at work. After eight months' march from the Tigris to the Thracian Bosphorus, the army halted at Chalcedon. At this point of time a report arose suddenly, that the Emperor Numerian was dead. The impatience of the soldiery would brook no uncertainty; they rushed to the spot; satisfied themselves of the fact; and, loudly denouncing as the murderer Aper, the captain of the guard, committed him to custody, and assigned to Dioclesian, whom at the same time they invested with the supreme power, the duty of investigating the case. Dioclesian acquitted himself of this task in a very summary way, by passing his sword through the captain before he could say a word in his defence. It seems that Dioclesian, having been promised the empire by a prophetess as soon as he should have killed a wild boar [Aper], was anxious to realize the omen. The whole proceeding has been taxed with injustice so manifest, as not even to seek a disguise. Meantime, it should be remembered that, *first*, Aper, as the captain of the guard, was answerable for the emperor's safety; *secondly*, that his anxiety to profit by the emperor's murder was a sure sign that he had participated in that act; and, *thirdly* that the assent of the soldiery to the open and public act of Dioclesian, implies a conviction on their part of Aper's guilt. Here let us pause, having now arrived at the fourth and last group of the Cæsars, to

notice the changes which had been wrought by time, co-operating with political events, in the very nature and constitution of the imperial office.

If it should unfortunately happen, that the palace of the Vatican, with its thirteen thousand <sup>56</sup> chambers, were to take fire — for a considerable space of time the fire would be retarded by the mere enormity of extent which it would have to traverse. But there would come at length a critical moment, at which the *maximum* of the retarding effect having been attained, the bulk and volume of the flaming mass would thenceforward assist the flames in the rapidity of their progress. Such was the effect upon the declension of the Roman empire from the vast extent of its territory. For a very long period that very extent, which finally became the overwhelming cause of its ruin, served to retard and to disguise it. A small encroachment, made at any one point upon the integrity of the empire was neither much regarded at Rome, nor perhaps in and for itself much deserved to be regarded. But a very narrow belt of encroachments, made upon almost *every* part of so enormous a circumference, was sufficient of itself to compose something of an antagonist force. And to these external dilapidations, we must add the far more important dilapidations from within, affecting all the institutions of the State, and all the forces, whether moral or political, which had originally raised it or maintained it. Causes which had been



latent in the public arrangements ever since the time of Augustus, and had been silently preying upon its vitals, had now reached a height which would no longer brook concealment. The fire which had smouldered through generations had broken out at length into an open conflagration. Uproar and disorder, and the anarchy of a superannuated empire, strong only to punish and impotent to defend, were at this time convulsing the provinces in every point of the compass. Rome herself had been menaced repeatedly. And a still more awful indication of the coming storm had been felt far to the south of Rome. One long wave of the great German deluge had stretched beyond the Pyrenees and the Pillars of Hercules, to the very soil of Ancient Carthage. Victorious banners were already floating on the margin of the Great Desert, and they were *not* the banners of Cæsar. Some vigorous hand was demanded at this moment, or else the funeral knell of Rome was on the point of sounding. Indeed, there is every reason to believe that, had the imbecile Carinus (the brother of Numerian) succeeded to the command of the Roman armies at this time, or any other than Dioclesian, the Empire of the West would have fallen to pieces within the next ten years.

Dioclesian was doubtless that man of iron whom the times demanded; and a foreign writer has gone so far as to class him amongst the greatest of men, if he

were not even himself the greatest. But the position of Dioclesian was remarkable beyond all precedent, and was alone sufficient to prevent his being the greatest of men, by making it necessary that he should be the most selfish. For the case stood thus: If Rome were in danger, much more so was Cæsar. If the condition of the empire were such that hardly any energy or any foresight was adequate to its defence, for the emperor, on the other hand, there was scarcely a possibility that he should escape destruction. The chances were in an overbalance against the empire; but for the emperor there was no chance at all. He shared in all the hazards of the empire; and had others so peculiarly pointed at himself, that his assassination was now become as much a matter of certain calculation, as seed time or harvest, summer or winter, or any other revolution of the seasons. The problem, therefore, for Dioclesian was a double one, — so to provide for the defence and maintenance of the empire, as simultaneously (and, if possible, through the very same institution) to provide for the personal security of Cæsar. This problem he solved, in some imperfect degree, by the only expedient perhaps open to him in that despotism, and in those times. But it is remarkable, that, by the revolution which he effected, the office of Roman Emperor was completely altered, and Cæsar became henceforwards an Oriental Sultan or Padishah. Augustus, when moulding for his future

purposes the form and constitution of that supremacy which he had obtained by inheritance and by arms, proceeded with so much caution and prudence, that even the style and title of his office was discussed in council as a matter of the first moment. The principle of his policy was to absorb into his own functions all those high offices which conferred any real power to balance or to control his own. For this reason he appropriated the tribunitian power; because that was a popular and representative office, which, as occasions arose, would have given some opening to democratic influences. But the consular office he left untouched; because all its power was transferred to the imperator, by the entire command of the army, and by the new organization of the provincial governments.<sup>57</sup> And in all the rest of his arrangements, Augustus had proceeded on the principle of leaving as many openings to civic influences, and impressing upon all his institutions as much of the old Roman character, as was compatible with the real and substantial supremacy established in the person of the emperor. Neither is it at all certain, as regarded even this aspect of the imperial office, that Augustus had the purpose, or so much as the wish, to annihilate all collateral power, and to invest the chief magistrate with absolute irresponsibility. For himself, as called upon to restore a shattered government, and out of the anarchy of civil wars to recombine the elements of power into some

shape better fitted for duration (and, by consequence, for insuring peace and protection to the world) than the extinct republic, it might be reasonable to seek such an irresponsibility. But, as regarded his successors, considering the great pains he took to discourage all manifestations of princely arrogance, and to develop, by education and example, the civic virtues of patriotism and affability in their whole bearing towards the people of Rome, there is reason to presume that he wished to remove them from popular control, without, therefore, removing them from popular influence.

Hence it was, and from this original precedent of Augustus, aided by the constitution which he had given to the office of imperator, that up to the era of Dioclesian, no prince had dared utterly to neglect the senate, or the people of Rome. He might hate the senate, like Severus, or Aurelian; he might even meditate their extermination, like the brutal Maximin. But this arose from any cause rather than from contempt. He hated them precisely because he feared them, or because he paid them an involuntary tribute of superstitious reverence, or because the malice of a tyrant interpreted into a sort of treason the rival influence of the senate over the minds of men. But, before Dioclesian, the undervaluing of the senate, or the harshest treatment of that body, had arisen from views which were *personal* to the individual Cæsar. It was now made to arise from the very constitution of the office

and the mode of the appointment. To defend the empire, it was the opinion of Dioclesian that a single emperor was not sufficient. And it struck him, at the same time, that by the very institution of a plurality of emperors, which was now destined to secure the integrity of the empire, ample provision might be made for the personal security of each emperor. He carried his plan into immediate execution, by appointing an associate to his own rank of Augustus in the person of Maximian — an experienced general; whilst each of them in effect multiplied his own office still farther by severally appointing a Cæsar, or hereditary prince. And thus the very same partition of the public authority, by means of a duality of emperors, to which the senate had often resorted of late, as the best means of restoring their own republican aristocracy, was now adopted by Dioclesian as the simplest engine for overthrowing finally the power of either senate or army to interfere with the elective privilege. This he endeavored to centre in the existing emperors; and, at the same moment, to discourage treason or usurpation generally, whether in the party choosing or the party chosen, by securing to each emperor, in the case of his own assassination, an avenger in the person of his surviving associate, as also in the persons of the two Cæsars, or adopted heirs and lieutenants. The associate emperor, Maximian, together with the two Cæsars — Galerius appointed by himself, and Constantius

Chlorus by Maximian — were all bound to himself by ties of gratitude ; all owing their stations ultimately to his own favor. And these ties he endeavored to strengthen by other ties of affinity ; each of the Augusti having given his daughter in marriage to his own adopted Cæsar. And thus it seemed scarcely possible that an usurpation should be successful against so firm a league of friends and relations.

The direct purposes of Dioclesian were but imperfectly attained ; the internal peace of the empire lasted only during his own reign ; and with his abdication of the empire commenced the bloodiest civil wars which has desolated the world since the contests of the great triumvirate. But the collateral blow, which he meditated against the authority of the senate, was entirely successful. Never again had the senate any real influence on the fate of the world. And with the power of the senate expired concurrently the weight and influence of Rome. Dioclesian is supposed never to have seen Rome, except on the single occasion when he entered it for the ceremonial purpose of a triumph. Even for that purpose it ceased to be a city of resort ; for Dioclesian's was the final triumph. And, lastly, even as the chief city of the empire for business or for pleasure, it ceased to claim the homage of mankind ; the Cæsar was already born whose destiny it was to cashier the metropolis of the world, and to appoint her successor. This also may be regarded in

effect as the ordinance of Dioclesian ; for he, by his long residence at Nicomedia, expressed his opinion pretty plainly, that Rome was not central enough to perform the functions of a capital to so vast an empire ; that this was one cause of the declension now become so visible in the forces of the State ; and that some city, not very far from the Hellespont or the Ægean Sea, would be a capital better adapted by position to the exigencies of the times.

But the revolutions effected by Dioclesian did not stop here. The simplicity of its republican origin had so far affected the external character and expression of the imperial office, that in the midst of luxury the most unbounded, and spite of all other corruptions, a majestic plainness of manners, deportment, and dress, had still continued from generation to generation, characteristic of the Roman emperor in his intercourse with his subjects. All this was now changed ; and for the Roman was substituted the Persian dress, the Persian style of household, a Persian court, and Persian manners. A diadem, or tiara beset with pearls, now encircled the temples of the Roman Augustus ; his sandals were studded with pearls, as in the Persian court ; and the other parts of his dress were in harmony with these. The prince was instructed no longer to make himself familiar to the eyes of men. He sequestered himself from his subjects in the recesses of his palace. None, who sought him, could any

longer gain easy admission to his presence. It was a point of his new duties to be difficult of access; and they who were at length admitted to an audience, found him surrounded by eunuchs, and were expected to make their approaches by genuflexions, by servile 'adorations,' and by real acts of worship as to a visible god.

It is strange that a ritual of court ceremonies, so elaborate and artificial as this, should first have been introduced by a soldier, and a warlike soldier like Dioclesian. This, however, is in part explained by his education and long residence in Eastern countries. But the same eastern training fell to the lot of Constantine, who was in effect his successor;<sup>58</sup> and the Oriental tone and standard established by these two emperors, though disturbed a little by the plain and military bearing of Julian, and one or two more emperors of the same breeding, finally re-established itself with undisputed sway in the Byzantine court.

Meantime the institutions of Dioclesian, if they had destroyed Rome and the senate as influences upon the course of public affairs, and if they had destroyed the Roman features of the Cæsars, do, notwithstanding, appear to have attained one of their purposes, in limiting the extent of imperial murders. Travelling through the brief list of the remaining Cæsars, we perceive a little more security for life; and hence the successions are less rapid. Constantine, who (like



Aaron's rod) had swallowed up all his competitors *seriatim*, left the empire to his three sons; and the last of these most unwillingly to Julian. That prince's Persian expedition, so much resembling in rashness and presumption the Russian campaign of Napoleon, though so much below it in the scale of its tragic results, led to the short reign of Jovian (or Jovinian), which lasted only seven months. Upon his death succeeded the house of Valentinian,<sup>59</sup> in whose descendant, of the third generation, the empire, properly speaking, expired. For the seven shadows who succeeded, from Avitus and Majorian to Julius Nepos and Romulus Augustulus, were in no proper sense Roman emperors, — they were not even emperors of the West, — but had a limited kingdom in the Italian peninsula. Valentinian the Third was, as we have said, the last emperor of the West.

But, in a fuller and ampler sense, recurring to what we have said of Dioclesian and the tenor of his great revolutions, we may affirm that Probus and Carus were the final representatives of the majesty of Rome: for they reigned over the whole empire, not yet incapable of sustaining its own unity; and in them were still preserved, not yet obliterated by oriental effeminacy those majestic features which reflected republican consuls, and, through them, the senate and people of Rome. That, which had offended Dioclesian in the condition of the Roman emperors, was the grandest

feature of their dignity. It is true that the peril of the office had become intolerable; each Cæsar submitted to his sad inauguration with a certainty, liable even to hardly any disguise from the delusions of youthful hope, that for him, within the boundless empire which he governed, there was no coast of safety, no shelter from the storm, no retreat, except the grave, from the dagger of the assassin. Gibbon has described the hopeless condition of one who should attempt to fly from the wrath of the almost omnipresent emperor. But this dire impossibility of escape was in the end dreadfully retaliated upon the emperor; persecutors and traitors were found everywhere: and the vindictive or the ambitious subject found himself as omnipresent as the jealous or the offended emperor.

The crown of the Cæsars was therefore a crown of thorns; and it must be admitted, that never in this world have rank and power been purchased at so awful a cost in tranquillity and peace of mind. The steps of Cæsar's throne were absolutely saturated with the blood of those who had possessed it: and so inexorable was that murderous fate which overhung that gloomy eminence, that at length it demanded the spirit of martyrdom in him who ventured to ascend it. In these circumstances, some change was imperatively demanded. Human nature was no longer equal to the terrors which it was summoned to face. But the changes of Dioclesian transmuted that golden sceptre

into a base oriental alloy. They left nothing behind of what had so much challenged the veneration of man: for it was in the union of republican simplicity with the irresponsibility of illimitable power — it was in the antagonism between the merely human and approachable condition of Cæsar as a man, and his divine supremacy as a potentate and king of kings — that the secret lay of his unrivalled grandeur. This perished utterly under the reforming hands of Dioclesian. Cæsar only it was that could be permitted to extinguish Cæsar: and a Roman emperor it was who, by remodelling, did in affect abolish, by exorcising from its foul terrors, did in effect disenchant of its sanctity, that imperial dignity, which having once perished, could have no second existence, and which was undoubtedly the sublimest incarnation of power, and a monument the mightiest of greatness built by human hands, which upon this planet has been suffered to appear.

## NOTES.

### NOTE 1. Page 9.

CONCERNING this question — once so fervidly debated, yet so unprofitably for the final adjudication, and in some respects, we may add, so erroneously — on a future occasion.

### NOTE 2. Page 10.

Or even of modern wit; witness the vain attempt of so many eminent JETI, and illustrious *Antecessors*, to explain in self-consistency the differing functions of the Roman Cæsar, and in what sense he was *legibus solutus*. The origin of this difficulty we shall soon understand.

### NOTE 3. Page 12.

‘*Nameless city.*’ — The true name of Rome it was a point of religion to conceal; and, in fact, it was never revealed.

### NOTE 4. Page 16.

This we mention, because a great error has been sometimes committed in exposing *their* error, that consisted, not in supposing that for a fifth time men were to be gathered under one sceptre, and that sceptre wielded by Jesus Christ, but in supposing that this great era had then arrived, or that with no deeper moral revolution men could be fitted for that yoke.

### NOTE 5. Page 20.

‘*Of ancient days.*’ — For it is remarkable, and it serves to mark an indubitable progress of mankind, that, before the Christian era, famines were of frèquent occurrence in countries the most civilized; afterwards they became rare, and latterly have entirely altered their character into occasional dearths.

## NOTE 6. Page 20.

Unless that hand were her own armed against herself; upon which topic there is a burst of noble eloquence in one of the ancient Panegyrici, when haranguing the Emperor Theodosius:— ‘Thou, Rome! that, having once suffered by the madness of Cinna, and of the cruel Marius raging from banishment, and of Sylla, that won his wreath of prosperity from thy disasters, and of Cæsar, compassionate to the dead, didst shudder at every blast of the trumpet filled by the breath of civil commotion, — thou, that, besides the wreck of thy soldiery perishing on either side, didst bewail, amongst thy spectacles of domestic woe, the luminaries of thy senate extinguished, the heads of thy consuls fixed upon a halberd, weeping for ages over thy self-slaughtered Catos, thy headless Ciceros (*truncosque Cicerones*), and unburied Pompeys; — to whom the party madness of thy own children had wrought in every age heavier woe than the Carthaginian thundering at thy gates, or the Gaul admitted within thy walls; on whom Cæmathia, more fatal than the day of Allia, — Collina, more dismal than Cannæ, — had inflicted such deep memorials of wounds, that, from bitter experience of thy own valor, no enemy was to thee so formidable as thyself; — thou, Rome! didst now for the first time behold a civil war issuing in a hallowed prosperity, a soldiery appeased, recovered Italy, and for thyself liberty established. Now first in thy long annals thou didst rest from a civil war in such a peace, that righteously, and with maternal tenderness, thou mightst claim for it the honors of a civic triumph.’

## NOTE 7. Page 23.

The fact is, that the emperor was more of a sacred and divine creature in his lifetime than after his death. His consecrated character as a living ruler was a truth; his canonization, a fiction of tenderness to his memory.

## NOTE 8. Page 38.

It is an interesting circumstance in the habits of the ancient Romans, that their journeys were pursued very much in the night-time, and by torch-light. Cicero, in one of his letters, speaks of passing through the towns of Italy by night, as a ser-

viceable scheme for some political purpose, either of avoiding too much to publish his motions, or of evading the necessity (else perhaps not avoidable), of drawing out the party sentiments of the magistrates in the circumstances of honor or neglect with which they might choose to receive him. His words, however, imply that the practice was by no means an uncommon one. And, indeed, from some passages in writers of the Augustan era, it would seem that this custom was not confined to people of distinction, but was familiar to a class of travellers so low in rank as to be capable of abusing their opportunities of concealment for the infliction of wanton injury upon the woods and fences which bounded the margin of the high-road. Under the cloud of night and solitude, the mischief-loving traveller was often in the habit of applying his torch to the withered boughs of woods, or to artificial hedges; and extensive ravages by fire, such as now happen not unfrequently in the American woods, (but generally from carelessness in scattering the glowing embers of a fire, or even the ashes of a pipe,) were then occasionally the result of mere wantonness of mischief. Ovid accordingly notices, as one amongst the familiar images of daybreak, the half-burnt torch of the traveller; and, apparently, from the position which it holds in his description, where it is ranked with the most familiar of all circumstances in all countries, — that of the rural laborer going out to his morning tasks, — it must have been common indeed :

‘Semiustamque facem vigilatâ nocte viator  
Ponet; et ad solitum rusticus ibit opus.’

This occurs in the *Fasti*; — elsewhere he notices it for its danger :

‘Ut facibus sepes ardent, cum forte viator  
Vel nimis admovit, vel jam sub luce reliquit.’

He, however, we see, good-naturedly ascribes the danger to mere carelessness, in bringing the torch too near to the hedge, or tossing it away at daybreak. But Varro, a more matter-of-fact observer, does not disguise the plain truth, that these disasters were often the product of pure malicious frolic. For instance, in recommending a certain kind of quickset fence, he insists upon it, as one of its advantages, that it will not readily ignite under the

torch of the mischievous wayfarer; 'Naturale seipimentum,' says he, 'quod obseri solet virgultis aut spinis, *prætereuntis lascivi non metuet facem.*' It is not easy to see the origin or advantage of this practice of nocturnal travelling (which must have considerably increased the hazards of a journey), excepting only in the heats of summer. It is probable, however, that men of high rank and public station may have introduced the practice by way of releasing corporate bodies in large towns from the burdensome ceremonies of public receptions; thus making a compromise between their own dignity and the convenience of the provincial public. Once introduced, and the arrangements upon the road for meeting the wants of travellers once adapted to such a practice, it would easily become universal. It is, however, very possible that mere horror of the heats of day-time may have been the original ground for it. The ancients appear to have shrunk from no hardship so trying and insufferable as that of heat. And in relation to that subject, it is interesting to observe the way in which the ordinary use of language has accommodated itself to that feeling. Our northern way of expressing effeminacy is derived chiefly from the hardships of cold. He that shrinks from the trials and rough experience of real life in any department, is described by the contemptuous prefix of *chimney-corner*, as if shrinking from the cold which he would meet on coming out into the open air amongst his fellow-men. Thus, a *chimney-corner* politician, for a mere speculator or unpractical dreamer. But the very same indolent habit of aerial speculation, which courts no test of real life and practice, is described by the ancients under the term *umbraticus*, or seeking the cool shade, and shrinking from the heat. Thus, an *umbraticus doctor* is one who has no practical solidity in his teaching. The fatigue and hardship of real life, in short, is represented by the ancients under the uniform image of heat, and by the moderns under that of cold.

NOTE 9. Page 41.

According to Suetonius, the circumstances of this memorable night were as follows:—As soon as the decisive intelligence was received, that the intrigues of his enemies had prevailed at Rome, and that the interposition of the popular magistrates (the tribunes) was set aside, Cæsar sent forward the troops, who were

then at his head-quarters, but in as private a manner as possible. He himself, by way of masque (*per dissimulationem*), attended a public spectacle, gave an audience to an architect who wished to lay before him a plan for a school of gladiators which Cæsar designed to build, and finally presented himself at a banquet, which was very numerously attended. From this, about sunset, he set forward in a carriage, drawn by mules, and with a small escort (*modico comitatu*). Losing his road, which was the most private he could find (*occultissimum*), he quitted his carriage and proceeded on foot. At dawn he met with a guide; after which followed the above incidents.

NOTE 10. Page 51.

Middleton's Life of Cicero, which still continues to be the most readable digest of these affairs, is feeble and contradictory. He discovers that Cæsar was no general! And the single merit which his work was supposed to possess, viz. the better and more critical arrangement of Cicero's Letters, in respect to their chronology, has of late years been detected as a robbery from the celebrated Bellenden, of James the First's time.

NOTE 11. Page 55.

Suetonius, speaking of this conspiracy, says, that Cæsar was *nominatos inter socios Catilinæ*, which has been erroneously understood to mean that he was *talked of* as an accomplice; but in fact, as Casaubon first pointed out, *nominatus* is a technical term of the Roman jurisprudence, and means that he was formally denounced.

NOTE 12. Page 64.

Cæsar had the merit of being the first person to propose the daily publication of the acts and votes of the senate. In the form of public and official despatches, he made also some useful innovations; and it may be mentioned, for the curiosity of the incident, that the cipher which he used in his correspondence, was the following very simple one: — For every letter of the alphabet he substituted that which stood fourth removed from it in the order of succession. Thus, for A, he used D; for D, G, and so on.



## NOTE 13. Page 80.

'The painful warrior, famoused for fight,  
 After a thousand victories once foil'd,  
 Is from the book of honor razed quite,  
 And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd.'

*Shakspeare's Sonnets.*

## NOTE 14. Page 86.

And this was entirely by the female side. The family descent of the first six Cæsars is so intricate, that it is rarely understood accurately; so that it may be well to state it briefly. Augustus was grand nephew to Julius Cæsar, being the son of his sister's daughter. He was also, by adoption, the *son* of Julius. He himself had one child only, viz. the infamous Julia, who was brought him by his second wife Scribonia; and through this Julia it was that the three princes, who succeeded to Tiberius, claimed relationship to Augustus. On that emperor's last marriage with Livia, he adopted the two sons whom she had borne to her divorced husband. These two noblemen, who stood in no degree of consanguinity whatever to Augustus, were Tiberius and Drusus. Tiberius left no children; but Drusus, the younger of the two brothers, by his marriage with the younger Antonia (daughter of Mark Anthony), had the celebrated Germanicus, and Claudius (afterwards emperor). Germanicus, though adopted by his uncle Tiberius, and destined to the empire, died prematurely. But, like Banquo, though he wore no crown, he left descendants who did. For, by his marriage with Agrippina, a daughter of Julia's by Agrippa (and therefore grand-daughter of Augustus), he had a large family, of whom one son became the Emperor Caligula; and one of the daughters, Agrippina the younger, by her marriage with a Roman nobleman, became the mother of the Emperor Nero. Hence it appears that Tiberius was uncle to Claudius, Claudius was uncle to Caligula, Caligula was uncle to Nero. But it is observable, that Nero and Caligula stood in another degree of consanguinity to each other through their grandmothers, who were both daughters of Mark Anthony the triumvir; for the elder Antonia married the grandfather of Nero; the younger Antonia (as we have stated above) married Drusus,

the grandfather of Caligula; and again, by these two ladies, they were connected not only with each other, but also with the Julian house, for the two Antonias were daughters of Mark Anthony by Octavia, sister to Augustus.

NOTE 15. Page 96.

But a memorial stone, in its inscription, makes the time longer •  
‘Quando urbs per novem dies arsit Neronianis temporibus.’

NOTE 16. Page 106.

At this early hour, witnesses, sureties, &c., and all concerned in the law courts, came up to Rome from villas, country towns, &c. But no ordinary call existed to summon travellers in the opposite direction; which accounts for the comment of the travellers on the errand of Nero and his attendants.

NOTE 17. Page 113.

We may add that the unexampled public grief which followed the death of Otho, exceeding even that which followed the death of Germanicus, and causing several officers to commit suicide, implies some remarkable goodness in this Prince, and a very unusual power of conciliating attachment.

NOTE 18. Page 117.

Blackwell, in his *Court of Augustus*, vol. i. p. 382, when noticing these lines, upon occasion of the murder of Cicero, in the final proscription under the last triumvirate, comments thus: ‘Those of the greatest and truly Roman spirit had been murdered in the field by Julius Cæsar: the rest were now massacred in the city by his son and successors; in their room came Syrians, Cappadocians, Phrygians, and other enfranchised slaves from the conquered nations;’ — ‘these in half a century had sunk so low, that Tiberius pronounced her very senators to be *homines ad servitutem natos*, men born to be slaves.’

NOTE 19. Page 117.

Suetonius indeed pretends that Augustus, personally at least, struggled against this ruinous practice — thinking it a matter of the highest moment, ‘Sincerum atque ab omni colluvione pere-

grini et servilis sanguinis incorruptum servare populum.' And Horace is ready with his flatteries on the same topic, lib. 3, Od. 6. But the facts are against them; for the question is not what Augustus did in his own person, (which at most could not operate very widely except by the example,) but what he permitted to be done. Now there was a practice familiar to those times — that when a congiary or any other popular liberality was announced, multitudes were enfranchised by avaricious masters in order to make them capable of the bounty (as citizens), and yet under the condition of transferring to their emancipators whatsoever they should receive; *ἵνα τον δημοσιως διδομενον σιτον λαμβανοντες κατα μηνα — φερωσι τοις δεδωκασι την ἐλευθεριαν*, says Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in order that after receiving the corn given publicly in every month, they might carry it to those who had bestowed upon them their freedom. In a case, then, where an extensive practice of this kind was exposed to Augustus, and publicly reproved by him, how did he proceed? Did he reject the new-made citizens? No; he contented himself with diminishing the proportion originally destined for each, so that the same absolute sum being distributed among a number increased by the whole amount of the new enrolments, of necessity the relative sum for each separately was so much less. But this was a remedy applied only to the pecuniary fraud as it would have affected himself. The permanent mischief to the state went unredressed.

NOTE 20. Page 118.

Part of the story is well known, but not the whole. Tiberius Nero, a promising young nobleman, had recently married a very splendid beauty. Unfortunately for him, at the marriage of Octavia (sister to Augustus) with Mark Anthony, he allowed his young wife, then about eighteen, to attend upon the bride. Augustus was deeply and suddenly fascinated by her charms, and without further scruple sent a message to Nero — intimating that he was in love with his wife, and would thank him to resign her. The other, thinking it vain, in those days of lawless proscription, to contest a point of this nature with one who commanded twelve legions, obeyed the requisition. Upon some motive, now unknown, he was persuaded even to degrade himself farther; for he actually officiated at the marriage in character of father, and

gave away the young beauty to his rival, although at that time six months advanced in pregnancy by himself. These humiliating concessions were extorted from him, and yielded (probably at the instigation of friends) in order to save his life. In the sequel they had the very opposite result; for he died soon after, and it is reasonably supposed of grief and mortification. At the marriage feast, an incident occurred which threw the whole company into confusion: A little boy, roving from couch to couch among the guests, came at length to that in which Livia (the bride) was lying by the side of Augustus, on which he cried out aloud, — ‘Lady, what are you doing here? You are mistaken — this is not your husband — he is there,’ (pointing to Tiberius,) ‘go, go — rise, lady, and recline beside *him*.’

## NOTE 21. Page 121.

Augustus, indeed, strove to exclude the women from one part of the circensian spectacles; and what was that? Simply from the sight of the *Athletæ*, as being naked. But that they should witness the pangs of the dying gladiators, he deemed quite allowable. The smooth barbarian considered, that a license of the first sort offended against decorum, whilst the other violated only the sanctities of the human heart, and the whole sexual character of women. It is our opinion, that to the brutalizing effect of these exhibitions we are to ascribe, not only the early extinction of the Roman drama, but generally the inferiority of Rome to Greece in every department of the fine arts. The fine temper of Roman sensibility, which no culture could have brought to the level of the Grecian, was thus dulled for *every* application.

## NOTE 22. Page 130.

No fiction of romance presents so awful a picture of the ideal tyrant as that of Caligula by Suetonius. His palace — radiant with purple and gold, but murder everywhere lurking beneath flowers; his smiles and echoing laughter — masking (yet hardly meant to mask) his foul treachery of heart; his hideous and tumultuous dreams — his baffled sleep — and his sleepless nights — compose the picture of an *Æschylus*. What a master’s sketch lies in these few lines: ‘*Incitabatur insomnio maxime; neque enim plus tribus horis nocturnis quiescebat; ac ne his placidâ*

quiete, at pavidâ miris rerum imaginibus; ut qui inter ceteras pelagi quondam speciem colloquentem secum videre visus sit. Ideoque magna parte noctis, vigilæ cubandique tædio, nunc toro residens, nunc per longissimas porticus vagus, invocare identidem atque expectare lucem consueverat:’ — *i. e.* ‘But, above all, he was tormented with nervous irritation, by sleeplessness; for he enjoyed not more than three hours of nocturnal repose; nor these even in pure untroubled rest, but agitated by phantasmata of portentous augury; as, for example, upon one occasion he fancied that he saw the sea, under some definite impersonation, conversing with himself. Hence it was, and from this incapacity of sleeping, and from weariness of lying awake, that he had fallen into habits of ranging all the night long through the palace, sometimes throwing himself on a couch, sometimes wandering along the vast corridors, watching for the earliest dawn, and anxiously invoking its approach.

NOTE 23. Page 132.

And hence we may the better estimate the trial to a Roman’s feelings in the personal deformity of baldness, connected with the Roman theory of its cause, for the exposure of it was perpetual.

NOTE 24. Page 133.

‘Expeditiones sub eo,’ says Spartian, ‘graves nullæ fuerunt. Bella etiam silentio pene transacta.’ But he does not the less add, ‘A militibus, propter curam exercitûs nimiam, multum amatus est.’

NOTE 25. Page 134.

In the true spirit of Parisian mummary, Bonaparte caused letters to be written from the War-office, in his own name, to particular soldiers of high military reputation in every brigade, (whose private history he had previously caused to be investigated,) alluding circumstantially to the leading facts in their personal or fam’ly career; a furlough accompanied this letter, and they were requested to repair to Paris, where the emperor anxiously desired to see them. Thus was the paternal interest expressed, which their leader took in each man’s fortunes; and

the effect of every such letter, it was not doubted, would diffuse itself through ten thousand other men.

NOTE 26. Page 135.

'*War in procinct*' — a phrase of Milton's in *Paradise Regained*, which strikingly illustrates his love of Latin phraseology; for unless to a scholar, previously acquainted with the Latin phrase of *in procinctu*, it is so absolutely unintelligible as to interrupt the current of the feeling.

NOTE 27. Page 136.

'*Crypts*' — these, which Spartian, in his life of Hadrian, denominates simply *cryptæ*, are the same which, in the Roman jurisprudence, and in the architectural works of the Romans, yet surviving, are termed *hypogæa deambulationes*, *i. e.* subterranean parades. Vitruvius treats of this luxurious class of apartments in connection with the *Apothecæ*, and other repositories or store-rooms, which were also in many cases underground, (for the same reason as our ice-houses, wine-cellars, &c. He (and from him Pliny and Apollonaris Sidonius) calls them *crypto-porticus* (cloistral colonnades); and Ulpian calls them *refugia* (sanctuaries, or places of refuge); St. Ambrose notices them under the name of *hypogæa* and *umbrosa penetralia*, as the resorts of voluptuaries: *Luxuriosorum est*, says he, *hypogæa querere* — *captantium frigus æstivum*; and again he speaks of *desidiosi qui ignava sub terris agant otia*.

NOTE 28. Page 136.

'*The topiary art*' — so called, as Salmasius thinks, from *τοπήιον*, a rope; because the process of construction was conducted chiefly by means of cords and strings. This art was much practised in the 17th century; and Casaubon describes one, which existed in his early days somewhere in the suburbs of Paris, on so elaborate a scale, that it represented Troy besieged, with the two hosts, their several leaders, and all other objects in their full proportion.

## NOTE 29. Page 137.

Very remarkable it is, and a fact which speaks volumes as to the democratic constitution of the Roman army, in the midst of that aristocracy which enveloped its parent state in a civil sense, that although there was a name for a *common soldier* (or *sentinel*, as he was termed by our ancestors) — viz. *miles gregarius*, or *miles manipularis* — there was none for an *officer*; that is to say, each several rank of officers had a name; but there was no generalization to express the idea of an officer abstracted from its several species or classes.

## NOTE 30. Page 139.

*Vitis*: and it deserves to be mentioned, that this staff, or cudgel, which was the official engine and cognizance of the Centurion's dignity, was meant expressly to be used in caning or cudgelling the inferior soldiers: '*Propterea vitis in manum data,*' says Salmasius, '*verberando scilicet militi qui deliquisset.*' We are no patrons of corporal chastisement, which, on the contrary, as the vilest of degradations, we abominate. The soldier, who does not feel himself dishonored by it, is already dishonored beyond hope or redemption. But still let this degradation not be imputed to the English army exclusively.

## NOTE 31. Page 145.

In the original *ter millies*, which is not much above two millions and one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling; but it must be remembered that one third as much, in addition to this popular largess, had been given to the army.

## NOTE 32. Page 145.

— '*nam bene gesti rebus, vel potius feliciter, etsi non summi — medii tamen obtinuit ducis famam.*'

## NOTE 33. Page 146.

This, however, is a point in which royal personages claim an old prescriptive right to be unreasonable in their exactions; and some, even amongst the most humane of Christian princes, have erred as flagrantly as Ælius Verus. George IV. we have under-

stood, was generally escorted from Dalkeith to Holyrood at a rate of twenty-two miles an hour. And of his father, the truly kind and paternal king, it is recorded by Miss Hawkins, (daughter of Sir J. Hawkins, the biographer of Johnson, &c.) that families who happened to have a son, brother, lover, &c. in the particular regiment of cavalry which furnished the escort for the day, used to suffer as much anxiety for the result as on the eve of a great battle.

NOTE 34. Page 154.

And not impossibly of America ; for it must be remembered that, when we speak of this quarter of the earth as yet undiscovered, we mean — to ourselves of the western climates; since as respects the eastern quarters of Asia, doubtless America was known there familiarly enough; and the high bounties of imperial Rome on rare animals, would sometimes perhaps propagate their influence even to those regions.

NOTE 35. Page 155.

In default of whalebone, one is curious to know of what they were made : — thin tablets of the linden-tree, it appears, were the best materials which the Augustus of that day could command.

NOTE 36. Page 156.

There is, however, a good deal of delusion prevalent on such subjects. In some English cavalry regiments, the custom is for the privates to take only one meal a day, which of course is dinner; and by some curious experiments it has appeared that such a mode of life is the healthiest. But at the same time we have ascertained that the quantity of porter or substantial ale drunk in these regiments does virtually allow many meals, by comparison with the washy tea breakfasts of most Englishmen.

NOTE 37. Page 159.

So much improvement had Christianity already accomplished in the feelings of men since the time of Augustus. That prince, in whose reign the Founder of this ennobling religion was born, had delighted so much and indulged so freely in the spectacles



of the amphitheatre, that Mæcenas summoned him reproachfully to leave them, saying, 'Surge tandem, carnifex.'

It is the remark of Capitoline, that 'gladiatoria spectacula omnifariam temperavit; temperavit etiam scenicas donationes;' — he controlled in every possible way the gladiatorial spectacles; he controlled also the rates of allowance to the stage performers. In these latter reforms, which simply restrained the exorbitant salaries of a class dedicated to the public pleasures, and unprofitable to the State, Marcus may have had no farther view than that which is usually connected with sumptuary laws. But in the restraints upon the gladiators, it is impossible to believe that his highest purpose was not that of elevating human nature, and preparing the way for still higher regulations. As little can it be believed that this lofty conception, and the sense of a degradation entailed upon human nature itself, in the spectacle of human beings matched against each other like brute beasts, and pouring out their blood upon the arena as a libation to the caprices of a mob, could have been derived from any other source than the contagion of Christian standards and Christian sentiments, then beginning to pervade and ventilate the atmosphere of society in its higher and philosophic regions. Christianity, without expressly affirming, everywhere indirectly supposes and presumes the infinite value and dignity of man as a creature, exclusively concerned in a vast and mysterious economy of restoration to a state of moral beauty and power in some former age mysteriously forfeited. Equally interested in its benefits, joint heirs of its promises, all men, of every color, language, and rank, Gentile or Jew, were here first represented as in one sense (and that the most important) equal; in the eye of this religion, they were, by necessity of logic, equal, as equal participators in the ruin and the restoration. Here first, in any available sense, was communicated to the standard of human nature a vast and sudden elevation; and reasonable enough it is to suppose, that some obscure sense of this, some sympathy with the great changes for man then beginning to operate, would first of all reach the inquisitive students of philosophy, and chiefly those in high stations, who cultivated an intercourse with all the men of original genius throughout the civilized world. The Emperor Hadrian had already taken a solitary step in the improvement

of human nature; and not, we may believe, without some sub-conscious influence received directly or indirectly from Christianity. So again, with respect to Marcus, it is hardly conceivable that he, a prince so indulgent and popular, could have thwarted, and violently gainsaid, a primary impulse of the Roman populace, without some adequate motive; and none *could* be adequate which was not built upon some new and exalted views of human nature, with which these gladiatorial sacrifices were altogether at war. The reforms which Marcus introduced into these ‘*crudelissima spectacula*,’ all having the common purpose of limiting their extent, were three. First, he set bounds to the extreme cost of these exhibitions; and this restriction of the cost covertly operated as a restriction of the practice. Secondly, — and this ordinance took effect whenever he was personally present, if not oftener, — he commanded, on great occasions, that these displays should be bloodless. Dion Cassius notices this fact in the following words: — ‘The Emperor Marcus was so far from taking delight in spectacles of bloodshed, that even the gladiators in Rome could not obtain his inspection of their contests, unless, like the wrestlers, they contended without imminent risk; for he never allowed them the use of sharpened weapons, but universally they fought before him with weapons previously blunted.’ Thirdly, he repealed the old and uniform regulation, which secured to the gladiators a perpetual immunity from military service. This necessarily diminished their available amount. Being now liable to serve their country usefully in the field of battle, whilst the concurrent limitation of the expenses in this direction prevented any proportionate increase of their numbers, they were so much the less disposable in aid of the public luxury. His fatherly care of all classes, and the universal benignity with which he attempted to raise the abject estimate and condition of even the lowest *Pariahs* in his vast empire, appears in another little anecdote, relating to a class of men equally with the gladiators given up to the service of luxury in a haughty and cruel populace. Attending one day at an exhibition of rope-dancing, one of the performers (a boy) fell and hurt himself; from which time the paternal emperor would never allow the rope-dancers to perform without mattresses or feather-beds spread below, to mitigate the violence of their falls.

## NOTE 38. Page 160.

Marcus had been associated, as Cæsar, and as emperor, with the son of the late beautiful Verus, who is usually mentioned by the same name.

## NOTE 39. Page 163.

Because the most effectual extinguishers of all ambition applied in that direction; since the very excellence of any particular fabric was the surest pledge of its virtual suppression by means of its legal restriction (which followed inevitably) to the use of the imperial house.

## NOTE 40. Page 165.

Upon which some *mimographus* built an occasional notice of the scandal then floating on the public breath in the following terms: One of the actors having asked '*Who was the adulterous paramour?*' receives for answer, *Tullus*. Who? he asks again; and again for three times running he is answered, *Tullus*. But asking a fourth time, the rejoinder is, *Jam dixi ter Tullus*.

## NOTE 41. Page 166.

In reality, if by *divus* and *divine honors* we understand a saint or spiritualized being having a right of intercession with the Supreme Deity, and by his temple, &c., if we understand a shrine attended by a priest to direct the prayers of his devotees, there is no such wide chasm between this pagan superstition and the adoration of saints in the Romish church, as at first sight appears. The fault is purely in the names: *divus* and *templum* are words too undistinguishing and generic.

## NOTE 42. Page 168.

Not long after this Alexander Severus meditated a temple to Christ; upon which design Lampridius observes, — *Quod et Hadrianus cogitasse fertur*; and, as Lampridius was himself a pagan, we believe him to have been right in his report, in spite of all which has been written by Casaubon and others, who maintain that these imperfect temples of Hadrian were left void

of all images or idols, — not in respect to the Christian practice, but because he designed them eventually to be dedicated to himself. However, be this as it may, thus much appears on the face of the story, — that Christ and Christianity had by that time begun to challenge the imperial attention; and of this there is an indirect indication, as it has been interpreted, even in the memoir of Marcus himself. The passage is this: ‘Fama fuit sanè quod sub philosophorum specie quidam rempublicam vexarent et privatos.’ The *philosophi*, here mentioned by Capitoline, are by some supposed to be the Christians; and for many reasons we believe it; and we understand the molestations of the public services and of private individuals, here charged upon them, as a very natural reference to the Christian doctrines falsely understood. There is, by the way, a fine remark upon Christianity, made by an infidel philosopher of Germany, which suggests a remarkable feature in the merits of Marcus Aurelius. There were, as this German philosopher used to observe, two schemes of thinking amongst the ancients, which severally fulfilled the two functions of a sound philosophy as respected the moral nature of man. One of these schemes presented us with a just ideal of moral excellence, a standard sufficiently exalted; this was the Stoic philosophy; and thus far its pretensions were unexceptionable and perfect. But unfortunately, whilst contemplating this pure ideal of man as he ought to be, the Stoic totally forgot the frail nature of man as he is; and by refusing all compromises and all condescensions to human infirmity, this philosophy of the Porch presented to us a brilliant prize and object for our efforts, but placed on an inaccessible height.

On the other hand, there was a very different philosophy at the very antagonist pole, — not blinding itself by abstractions too elevated, submitting to what it finds, bending to the absolute facts and realities of man’s nature, and affably adapting itself to human imperfections. There was the philosophy of Epicurus; and undoubtedly, as a beginning, and for the elementary purpose of conciliating the affections of the pupil, it was well devised; but here the misfortune was, that the ideal, or *maximum perfectionis*, attainable by human nature, was pitched so low, that the humility of its condescensions and the excellence of its means were all to no purpose, as leading to nothing further. One

mode presented a splendid end, but insulated, and with no means fitted to a human aspirant for communicating with its splendors; the other, an excellent road, but leading to no worthy or proportionate end. Yet these, as regarded morals, were the best and ultimate achievements of the pagan world. Now Christianity, said he, is the synthesis of whatever is separately excellent in either. It will abate as little as the haughtiest Stoicism of the ideal which it contemplates as the first postulate of true morality; the absolute holiness and purity which it demands are as much raised above the poor performances of actual man, as the absolute wisdom and impeccability of the Stoic. Yet, unlike the Stoic scheme, Christianity is aware of the necessity, and provides for it, that the means of appropriating this ideal perfection should be such as are consistent with the nature of a most erring and imperfect creature. Its motion is *towards* the divine, but *by* and *through* the human. In fact, it offers the Stoic humanized in his scheme of means, and the Epicurean exalted in his final objects. Nor is it possible to conceive a practicable scheme of morals which should not rest upon such a synthesis of the two elements as the Christian scheme presents; nor any other mode of fulfilling that demand than such a one as is there first brought forward, viz., a double or Janus nature, which stands in an equivocal relation, — to the divine nature by his actual perfections, to the human nature by his participation in the same animal frailties and capacities of fleshly temptation. No other vinculum could bind the two postulates together, of an absolute perfection in the end proposed, and yet of utter imperfection in the means for attaining it.

Such was the outline of this famous tribute by an unbelieving philosopher to the merits of Christianity as a scheme of moral discipline. Now, it must be remembered that Marcus Aurelius was by profession a Stoic; and that generally, as a theoretical philosopher, but still more as a Stoic philosopher, he might be supposed incapable of descending from these airy altitudes of speculation to the true needs, infirmities, and capacities of human nature. Yet strange it is, that he, of all the good emperors, was the most thoroughly human and practical. In evidence of which, one body of records is amply sufficient, which is, the very extensive and wise reforms which he, beyond all the Cæsars,

executed in the existing laws. To all the exigencies of the times, and to all the new necessities developed by the progress of society, he adjusted the old laws, or supplied new ones. The same praise, therefore, belongs to him, which the German philosopher conceded to Christianity, of reconciling the austere ideal with the practical; and hence another argument for presuming him half baptized into the new faith.

NOTE 43. Page 182.

Amongst these institutions, none appear to us so remarkable, or fitted to accomplish so prodigious a circle of purposes belonging to the highest state policy, as the Roman method of colonization. Colonies were, in effect, the great engine of Roman conquest; and the following are among a few of the great ends to which they were applied. First of all, how came it that the early armies of Rome served, and served cheerfully, without pay? Simply because all who were victorious knew that they would receive their arrears in the fullest and amplest form upon their final discharge, viz., in the shape of a colonial estate—large enough to rear a family in comfort, and seated in the midst of similar allotments, distributed to their old comrades in arms. These lands were already, perhaps, in high cultivation, being often taken from conquered tribes; but, if not, the new occupants could rely for aid of every sort, for social intercourse, and for all the offices of good neighborhood upon the surrounding proprietors—who were sure to be persons in the same circumstances as themselves, and draughted from the same legion. For be it remembered, that in the primitive ages of Rome, concerning which it is that we are now speaking, entire legions—privates and officers—were transferred in one body to the new colony. ‘*Antiquitus*,’ says the learned Goesius, ‘*deducebantur integræ legiones, quibus parta victoria.*’ Neither was there much waiting for this honorary gift. In later ages, it is true, when such resources were less plentiful, and when regular pay was given to the soldiery, it was the veteran only who obtained this splendid provision; but in the earlier times, a single fortunate campaign not seldom dismissed the young recruit to a life of ease and honor. ‘*Multis legionibus*,’ says Hyginus, ‘*contigit bellum feliciter transigere, et ad laboriosam agriculturæ requiem*

*primo tyrocinii gradu* purvenire. Nam cum signis et aquilâ et primis ordinibus et tribunis deducebantur.' Tacitus also notices this organization of the early colonies, and adds the reason of it, and its happy effect, when contrasting it with the vicious arrangements of the colonizing system in his own days. 'Olim,' says he, 'universæ legiones deducebantur cum tribunis et centurionibus, et sui cujusque ordinis militibus, *ut consensu et charitate republicam efficerent.*' Secondly, not only were the troops in this way at a time when the public purse was unequal to the expenditure of war — but this pay, being contingent on the successful issue of the war, added the strength of self-interest to that of patriotism in stimulating the soldier to extraordinary efforts. Thirdly, not only did the soldier in this way reap his pay, but also he reaped a reward (and that besides a trophy and perpetual monument of his public services), so munificent as to constitute a permanent provision for a family; and accordingly he was now encouraged, nay, enjoined, to marry. For here was an hereditary landed estate equal to the liberal maintenance of a family. And thus did a simple people, obeying its instinct of conquest, not only discover, in its earliest days, the subtle principle of Machiavel — *Let war support war*; but (which is far more than Machiavel's view) they made each present war support many future wars — by making it support a new offset from the population, bound to the mother city by indissoluble ties of privilege and civic duties; and in many other ways they made every war, by and through the colonizing system to which it gave occasion, serviceable to future aggrandizement. War, managed in this way, and with these results, became to Rome what commerce or rural industry is to other countries, viz., the only hopeful and general way for making a fortune. Fourthly, by means of colonies it was that Rome delivered herself from her surplus population. Prosperous and well-governed, the Roman citizens of each generation outnumbered those of the generation preceding. But the colonies provided outlets for these continual accessions of people, and absorbed them faster than they could arise.\* And thus the great original sin of modern States, that

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\* And in this way we must explain the fact — that, in the many successive numerations of the people continually noticed by

heel of Achilles in which they are all vulnerable, and which (generally speaking) becomes more oppressive to the public prosperity as that prosperity happens to be greater, (for in poor States and under despotic governments, this evil does not exist,) that flagrant infirmity of our own country, for which no statesman has devised any commensurate remedy, was to ancient Rome a perpetual foundation and well-head of public strength and enlarged resources. With us of modern times, when population greatly outruns the demand for labor, whether it be under the stimulus of upright government, and just laws justly administered, in combination with the manufacturing system (as in England), or (as in Ireland) under the stimulus of idle habits, cheap subsistence, and a low standard of comfort — we think it much if we can keep down insurrection by the bayonet and the sabre. *Lucro ponamus* is our cry, if we can effect even thus much; whereas Rome, in her simplest and pastoral days, converted this menacing danger and standing opprobrium of modern statesmanship to her own immense benefit. Not satisfied merely to have neutralized it, she drew from it the vital resources of her martial aggrandizement. For, *Fifthly*, these colonies were in two ways made the corner-stones of her martial policy: 1st, They were looked to as nurseries of their armies; during one generation the original colonists, already trained to military habits, were themselves disposable for this purpose on any great emergency; these men transmitted heroic traditions to their posterity; and, at all events, a more robust population was always at hand in agricultural colonies than could be had in the metropolises. Cato the elder, and all the early writers, notice the quality of such levies as being far superior to those drawn from a population of sedentary habits. 2dly, The Italian colonies, one and all, performed the functions which in our day are assigned to garrisoned towns and frontier fortresses. In the earliest times they discharged a still more critical service, by sometimes en-

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Livy and others, we do not find that sort of multiplication which we might have looked for in a State so ably governed. The truth is, that the continual surpluses had been carried off by the colonizing drain, before they could become noticeable or troublesome.



tirely displacing a hostile population, and more often by dividing it, and breaking its unity. In cases of desperate resistance to the Roman arms, marked by frequent infraction of treaties, it was usual to remove the offending population to a safer situation, separated from Rome by the Tiber; sometimes entirely to disperse and scatter it. But, where these extremities were not called for by expediency or the Roman maxims of justice, it was judged sufficient to *interpolate*, as it were, the hostile people by colonizations from Rome, which were completely organized \* for mutual aid, having officers of all ranks dispersed amongst them, and for overawing the growth of insurrectionary movements amongst their neighbors. Acting on this system, the Roman colonies in some measure resembled the *English Pale*, as existing at one era in Ireland. This mode of service, it is true, became obsolete in process of time, concurrently with the dangers which it was shaped to meet; for the whole of Italy proper, together with that part of Italy called Cisalpine Gaul, was at length reduced to unity and obedience by the almighty republic. But in forwarding that great end, and indispensable condition towards all foreign warfare, no one military engine in the whole armory of Rome availed so much as her Italian colonies. The other use of these colonies, as frontier garrisons, or, at any rate, as interposing between a foreign enemy and the gates of Rome, they continued to perform long after their earlier uses had passed away; and Cicero himself notices their value in this view. ‘Colonias,’ says he [*Orat. in Rullum*], ‘sic idoneis in locis contra suspicionem periculi collocarunt, ut esse non oppida Italiæ sed *propugnacula* imperii viderentur.’ Finally, the colonies were the best means of promoting tillage, and the culture of vineyards. And though this service, as regarded the Italian colonies, was greatly defeated in succeeding times by the ruinous largesses of corn [*frumentationes*], and other vices of the Roman policy after the vast revolution effected by universal

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\* That is indeed involved in the technical term of *Deductio*; for unless the ceremonies, religious and political, of inauguration and organization, were duly complied with, the colony was not entitled to be considered as *deducta*—that is, solemnly and ceremonially transplanted from the metropolis.

luxury, it is not the less true that, left to themselves and their natural tendency, the Roman colonies would have yielded this last benefit as certainly as any other. Large volumes exist, illustrated by the learning of Rigaltius, Salmasius, and Goesius, upon the mere technical arrangements of the Roman colonies; and whole libraries might be written on these same colonies, considered as engines of exquisite state policy.

NOTE 44. Page 191.

On this occasion we may notice that the final execution of the vengeance projected by Maternus, was reserved for a public festival, exactly corresponding to the modern *carnival*; and from an expression used by Herodian, it is plain that *masquerading* had been an ancient practice in Rome.

NOTE 45. Page 192.

See Casaubon's notes upon Theophrastus.

NOTE 46. Page 193.

Viz. the Temple of Peace; at that time the most magnificent edifice in Rome. Temples, it is well known, were the places used in ancient times as banks of deposit. For this function they were admirably fitted by their inviolable sanctity.

NOTE 47. Page 194.

What a prodigious opportunity for the zoölogist! — And considering that these shows prevailed for five hundred years, during all which period the amphitheatre gave bounties, as it were, to the hunter and the fowler of every climate, and that, by means of a stimulus so constantly applied, scarcely any animal, the shyest, rarest, fiercest, escaped the demands of the arena, — no one fact so much illustrates the inertia of the public mind in those days, and the indifference to all scientific pursuits, as that no annotator should have risen to Pliny the elder — no rival to the immortal tutor of Alexander.

## NOTE 48. Page 198.

It is worthy of notice, that, under any suspension of the imperial power or office, the senate was the body to whom the Roman mind even yet continued to turn. In this case, both to color their crime with a show of public motives, and to interest this great body in their own favor by associating them in their own dangers, the conspirators pretended to have found a long roll of senatorial names included in the same page of condemnation with their own. A manifest fabrication.

## NOTE 49. Page 199.

Historians have failed to remark the contradiction between this statement and the allegation that Lætus selected Pertinax for the throne on a consideration of his ability to protect the assassins of Commodus.

## NOTE 50. Page 223.

And it is a striking illustration of the extent to which the revolution had gone, that, previously to the Persian expedition of the last Gordian, Antioch, the Roman capital of Syria, had been occupied by the enemy.

## NOTE 51. Page 224.

This Arab emperor reigned about five years; and the jubilee celebration occurred in his second year. Another circumstance gives importance to the Arabian, that, according to one tradition, he was the first Christian emperor. If so, it is singular that one of the bitterest persecutors of Christianity should have been his immediate successor — Decius.

## NOTE 52. Page 224.

It has proved a most difficult problem, in the hands of all speculators upon the imperial history, to fathom the purposes, or throw any light upon the purposes, of the Emperor Decius, in attempting the revival of the ancient but necessarily obsolete office of a public censorship. Either it was an act of pure verbal

pedantry, or a mere titular decoration of honor, (as if a modern prince should create a person Arch-Grand-Elector, with no objects assigned to his electing faculty,) or else, if it really meant to revive the old duties of the censorship, and to assign the very same field for the exercise of those duties, it must be viewed as the very grossest practical anachronism that has ever been committed. We mean by an anachronism, in common usage, that sort of blunder when a man ascribes to one age the habits, customs, or generally the characteristics of another. This, however, may be a mere lapse of memory, as to a matter of fact, and implying nothing at all discreditable to the understanding, but only that a man has shifted the boundaries of chronology a little this way or that; as if, for example, a writer should speak of printed books as existing at the day of Agincourt, or of artillery as existing in the first Crusade, here would be an error, but a venial one. A far worse kind of anachronism, though rarely noticed as such, is where a writer ascribes sentiments and modes of thought incapable of co-existing with the sort or the degree of civilization then attained, or otherwise incompatible with the structure of society in the age or the country assigned. For instance, in Southey's *Don Roderick* there is a cast of sentiment in the Gothic king's remorse and contrition of heart, which has struck many readers as utterly unsuitable to the social and moral development of that age, and redolent of modern methodism. This, however, we mention only as an illustration, without wishing to hazard an opinion upon the justice of that criticism. But even such an anachronism is less startling and extravagant when it is confined to an ideal representation of things, than where it is practically embodied and brought into play amongst the realities of life. What would be thought of a man who should attempt, in 1833, to revive the ancient office of *Fool*, as it existed down to the reign, suppose, of our Henry VIII. in England? Yet the error of the Emperor Decius was far greater, if he did in sincerity and good faith believe that the Rome of his times was amenable to that license of unlimited correction, and of interference with private affairs, which republican freedom and simplicity had once conceded to the censor. In reality, the ancient censor, in some parts of his office, was neither more nor less than a compendious legislator. Acts of attainder, divorce bills, &c.,

illustrates the case in England; they are cases of law, modified to meet the case of an individual; and the censor, having a sort of equity jurisdiction, was intrusted with discretionary powers for reviewing, revising, and amending, *prò re nata*, whatever in the private life of a Roman citizen seemed, to his experienced eye, alien to the simplicity of an austere republic; whatever seemed vicious or capable of becoming vicious, according to their rude notions of political economy; and, generally, whatever touched the interests of the commonwealth, though not falling within the general province of legislation, either because it might appear undignified in its circumstances, or too narrow in its range of operation for a public anxiety, or because considerations of delicacy and prudence might render it unfit for a public scrutiny. Take one case, drawn from actual experience, as an illustration: A Roman nobleman, under one of the early emperors, had thought fit, by way of increasing his income, to retire into rural lodgings, or into some small villa, whilst his splendid mansion in Rome was let to a rich tenant. That a man who wore the *lacticlave*, (which in practical effect of splendor we may consider equal to the ribbon and star of a modern order,) should descend to such a degrading method of raising money, was felt as a scandal to the whole nobility.\* Yet what could be done? To have

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\* This feeling still exists in France. ‘One winter,’ says the author of *The English Army in France*, vol. ii. p. 106–7, ‘our commanding officer’s wife formed the project of hiring the chateau during the absence of the owner; but a more profound insult could not have been offered to a Chevalier de St. Louis. Hire his house! What could these people take him for? A sordid wretch who would stoop to make money by such means? They ought to be ashamed of themselves. He could never respect an Englishman again.’ ‘And yet,’ adds the writer, ‘this gentleman (had an officer been billeted there) would have sold him a bottle of wine out of his cellar, or a billet of wood from his stack, or an egg from his hen-house, at a profit of fifty per cent., not only without scruple, but upon no other terms. It was as common as ordering wine at a tavern, to call the servant of any man’s establishment where we happened to be quartered, and

interfered with his conduct by an express law, would be to infringe the sacred rights of property, and to say, in effect, that a man should not do what he would with his own. This would have been a remedy far worse than the evil to which it was applied; nor could it have been possible so to shape the principle of a law, as not to make it far more comprehensible than was desired. The senator's trespass was in a matter of decorum, but the law would have trespassed on the first principles of justice. Here, then, was a case within the proper jurisdiction of the censor; he took notice, in his public report, of the senator's error; or probably, before coming to that extremity, he admonished him privately on the subject. Just as, in England, had there been such an officer, he would have reproved those men of rank who mounted the coach-box, who extended a public patronage to the 'fancy,' or who rode their own horses at a race. Such a reproof, however, unless it were made practically operative, and were powerfully supported by the whole body of the aristocracy, would recoil upon its author as a piece of impertinence, and would soon be resented as an unwarrantable liberty taken with private life; the censor would be kicked or challenged to private combat, according to the taste of the parties aggrieved. The office is clearly in this dilemma: if the censor is supported

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demand an account of his cellar, as well as the price of the wine we selected!' This feeling existed, and perhaps to the same extent, two centuries ago, in England. Not only did the aristocracy think it a degradation to act the part of landlord with respect to their own houses, but also, except in select cases, to act that of tenant. Thus, the first Lord Brooke (the famous Fulke Greville), writing to inform his next neighbor, a woman of rank, that the house she occupied had been purchased by a London citizen, confesses his fears that he shall in consequence lose so valuable a neighbor; for, doubtless, he adds, your ladyship will not remain as tenant to 'such a fellow.' And yet the man had notoriously held the office of Lord Mayor, which made him, for the time, *Right Honorable*. The Italians of this day make no scruple to let off the whole, or even part, of their fine mansions to strangers.

by the State, then he combines in his own person both legislative and executive functions, and possesses a power which is frightfully irresponsible; if, on the other hand, he is left to such support as he can find in the prevailing spirit of manners, and the old traditionary veneration for his sacred character, he stands very much in the situation of a priesthood, which has great power or none at all, according to the condition of a country in moral and religious feeling, coupled with the more or less primitive state of manners. How, then, with any rational prospect of success, could Decius attempt the revival of an office depending so entirely on moral supports, in an age when all those supports were withdrawn? The prevailing spirit of manners was hardly fitted to sustain even a toleration of such an office; and as to the traditionary veneration for the sacred character, from long disuse of its practical functions, *that* probably was altogether extinct. If these considerations are plain and intelligible even to us, by the men of that day they must have been felt with a degree of force that could leave no room for doubt or speculation on the matter. How was it, then, that the emperor only should have been blind to such general light?

In the absence of all other, even plausible, solutions of this difficulty, we shall state our own theory of the matter. Decius, as is evident from his fierce persecution of the Christians, was not disposed to treat Christianity with indifference, under any form which it might assume, or however masked. Yet there were quarters in which it lurked not liable to the ordinary modes of attack. Christianity was creeping up with inaudible steps into high places — nay, into the very highest. The immediate predecessor of Decius upon the throne, Philip the Arab, was known to be a disciple of the new faith; and amongst the nobles of Rome, through the females and the slaves, that faith had spread its roots in every direction. Some secrecy, however, attached to the profession of a religion so often proscribed. Who should presume to tear away the mask which prudence or timidity had taken up? A *delator*, or professional informer, was an infamous character. To deal with the noble and illustrious, the descendants of the Marcelli and the Gracchi, there must be nothing less than a great state officer, supported by the censor and the senate, having an unlimited privilege of scrutiny

and censure, authorized to inflict the brand of infamy for offences not challenged by express law, and yet emanating from an elder institution, familiar to the days of reputed liberty. Such an officer was the censor; and such were the antichristian purposes of Decius in his revival.

NOTE 53. Page 228.

Some of these traditions have been preserved, which represent Sapor as using his imperial captive for his stepping-stone, or *anabathrum*, in mounting his horse. Others go farther, and pretend that Sapor actually flayed his unhappy prisoner while yet alive. The temptation to these stories was perhaps found in the craving for the marvellous, and in the desire to make the contrast more striking between the two extremes in Valerian's life.

NOTE 54. Page 229.

And this incompetency was *permanently* increased by rebellions that were brief and fugitive: for each insurgent almost necessarily maintained himself for the moment by spoliations and robberies which left lasting effects behind them; and too often he was tempted to ally himself with some foreign enemy amongst the barbarians; and perhaps to introduce him into the heart of the empire.

NOTE 55. Page 232.

Zenobia is complimented by all historians for her magnanimity; but with no foundation in truth. Her first salutation to Aurelian was a specimen of abject flattery; and her last *public* words were evidences of the basest treachery in giving up her generals, and her chief counsellor Longinus, to the vengeance of the ungenerous enemy.

NOTE 56. Page 245.

'*Thirteen thousand chambers.*'—The number of the chambers in this prodigious palace is usually estimated at that amount. But Lady Miller, who made particular inquiries on this subject,



ascertained that the total amount, including cellars and closets, capable of receiving a bed, was fifteen thousand.

NOTE 57. Page 248.

In no point of his policy was the cunning or the sagacity of Augustus so much displayed, as in his treaty of partition with the senate, which settled the distribution of the provinces, and their future administration. Seeming to take upon himself all the trouble and hazard, he did in effect appropriate all the power, and left to the senate little more than trophies of show and ornament. As a first step, all the greater provinces, as Spain and Gaul, were subdivided into many smaller ones. This done, Augustus proposed that the senate should preside over the administration of those amongst them which were peaceably settled, and which paid a regular tribute; whilst all those which were the seats of danger, — either as being exposed to hostile inroads, or to internal commotions, — all, therefore, in fact, *which could justify the keeping up of a military force*, he assigned to himself. In virtue of this arrangement, the senate possessed in Africa those provinces which had been formed out of Carthage, Cyrene, and the kingdom of Numidia; in Europe, the richest and most quiet part of Spain (*Hispania BatICA*;) with the large islands of Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and Crete, and some districts of Greece; in Asia, the kingdoms of Pontus and Bithynia, with that part of Asia Minor technically called Asia; whilst, for his own share, Augustus retained Gaul, Syria, the chief part of Spain, and Egypt, the granary of Rome; finally, all the military posts on the Euphrates, on the Danube, or the Rhine.

Yet even the showy concessions here made to the senate were defeated by another political institution, settled at the same time. It had been agreed that the governors of provinces should be appointed by the emperor and the senate jointly. But within the senatorial jurisdiction, these governors, with the title of *Proconsuls*, were to have no military power whatsoever; and the appointments were good only for a single year. Whereas, in the imperial provinces, where the governor bore the title of *Proprætor*, there was provision made for a military establishment; and as to duration, the office was regulated entirely by

the emperor's pleasure. One other ordinance, on the same head, riveted the vassalage of the senate. Hitherto, a great source of the senate's power had been found in the uncontrolled management of the provincial revenues; but at this time, Augustus so arranged that branch of the administration, that, throughout the senatorian or proconsular provinces, all taxes were immediately paid into the *ærarium*, or treasury of the State; whilst the whole revenues of the proprætorian (or imperial) provinces, from this time forward, flowed into the *fiscus*, or private treasure of the individual emperor.

NOTE 58. Page 253.

On the abdication of Dioclesian and of Maximian, Galerius and Constantius succeeded as the new Augusti. But Galerius, as the more immediate representative of Dioclesian, thought himself entitled to appoint both Cæsars, — the Daza (or Maximus) in Syria, Severus in Italy. Meantime, Constantine, the son of Constantius, with difficulty obtaining permission from Galerius, paid a visit to his father; upon whose death, which followed soon after, Constantine came forward as a Cæsar, under the appointment of his father. Galerius submitted with a bad grace; but Maxentius, a reputed son of Maximian, was roused by emulation with Constantine to assume the purple; and being joined by his father, they jointly attacked and destroyed Severus. Galerius, to revenge the death of his own Cæsar, advanced towards Rome; but being compelled to a disastrous retreat, he resorted to the measure of associating another emperor with himself, as a balance to his new enemies. This was Licinius; and thus, at one time, there were six emperors, either as Augusti or as Cæsars. Galerius, however, dying, all the rest were in succession destroyed by Constantine.

NOTE 59. Page 254.

Valentinian the First, who admitted his brother Valens to a partnership in the empire, had, by his first wife, an elder son, Gratian, who reigned and associated with himself Theodosius, commonly called the Great. By his second wife he had Valentinian the Second, who, upon the death of his brother Gratian,

was allowed to share the empire by Theodosius. Theodosius, by his first wife, had two sons, — Arcadius, who afterwards reigned in the east, and Honorius, whose western reign was so much illustrated by Stilicho. By a second wife, daughter to Valentinian the First, Theodosius had a daughter, (half-sister, therefore, to Honorius,) whose son was Valentinian the Third.

# THE AVENGER,

*A NARRATIVE;*

AND OTHER PAPERS.

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## THE AVENGER.

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“Why callest thou me murderer, and not rather the wrath of God burning after the steps of the oppressor, and cleansing the earth when it is wet with blood?”

THAT series of terrific events by which our quiet city and university in the north-eastern quarter of Germany were convulsed during the year 1816, has in itself, and considered merely as a blind movement of human tiger-passion ranging unchained amongst men, something too memorable to be forgotten or left without its own separate record; but the moral lesson impressed by these events is yet more memorable, and deserves the deep attention of coming generations in their struggle after human improvement, not merely in its own limited field of interest directly awakened, but in all analogous fields of interest; as in fact already, and more than once, in connection with these very events, *this lesson has* obtained the effectual attention of Christian kings and princes assembled in congress. No tragedy, indeed, amongst all the sad ones by which the charities of the human heart or of the fireside have ever been outraged, can better merit a separate chapter in the private history of German manners or social life than this unparalleled case. And, on the other



hand, no one can put in a better claim to be the historian than myself.

I was at the time, and still am, a professor in that city and university which had the melancholy distinction of being its theatre. I knew familiarly all the parties who were concerned in it, either as sufferers or as agents. I was present from first to last, and watched the whole course of the mysterious storm which fell upon our devoted city in a strength like that of a West Indian hurricane, and which did seriously threaten at one time to depopulate our university, through the dark suspicions which settled upon its members, and the natural reaction of generous indignation in repelling them ; whilst the city in its more stationary and native classes would very soon have manifested *their* awful sense of things, of the hideous insecurity for life, and of the unfathomable dangers which had undermined their hearths below their very feet, by sacrificing, whenever circumstances allowed them, their houses and beautiful gardens in exchange for days uncursed by panic, and nights unpolluted by blood. Nothing, I can take upon myself to assert, was left undone of all that human foresight could suggest, or human ingenuity could accomplish. But observe the melancholy result : the more certain did these arrangements strike people as remedies for the evil, so much the more effectually did they aid the terror, but, above all, the awe, the sense of mystery, when ten cases of total extermination, applied to separate households, had occurred, in every one of which these precautionary aids had failed to yield the slightest assistance. The

horror, the perfect frenzy of fear, which seized upon the town after that experience, baffles all attempt at description. Had these various contrivances failed merely in some human and intelligible way, as by bringing the aid too tardily — still, in such cases, though the danger would no less have been evidently deepened, nobody would have felt any further mystery than what, from the very first, rested upon the persons and the motives of the murderers. But, as it was, when, in ten separate cases of exterminating carnage, the astounded police, after an examination the most searching, pursued from day to day, and almost exhausting the patience by the minuteness of the investigation, had finally pronounced that no attempt apparently had been made to benefit by any of the signals preconcerted, that no footstep apparently had moved in that direction — then, and after that result, a blind misery of fear fell upon the population, so much the worse than any anguish of a beleaguered city that is awaiting the storming fury of a victorious enemy, by how much the shadowy, the uncertain, the infinite, is at all times more potent in mastering the mind than a danger that is known, measurable, palpable, and human. The very police, instead of offering protection or encouragement, were seized with terror for themselves. And the general feeling, as it was described to me by a grave citizen whom I met in a morning walk (for the overmastering sense of a public calamity broke down every barrier of reserve, and all men talked freely to all men in the streets, as they would have done during the rockings of an earthquake), was,

even amongst the boldest, like that which sometimes takes possession of the mind in dreams — when one feels one's self sleeping alone, utterly divided from all call or hearing of friends, doors open that should be shut, or unlocked that should be triply secured, the very walls gone, barriers swallowed up by unknown abysses, nothing around one but frail curtains, and a world of illimitable night, whisperings at a distance, correspondence going on between darkness and darkness, like one deep calling to another, and the dreamer's own heart the centre from which the whole network of this unimaginable chaos radiates, by means of which the blank *privations* of silence and darkness become powers the most *positive* and awful.

Agencies of fear, as of any other passion, and, above all, of passion felt in communion with thousands, and in which the heart beats in conscious sympathy with an entire city, through all its regions of high and low, young and old, strong and weak ; such agencies avail to raise and transfigure the natures of men ; mean minds become elevated ; dull men become eloquent ; and when matters came to this crisis, the public feeling, as made known by voice, gesture, manner, or words, was such that no stranger could represent it to his fancy. In that respect, therefore, I had an advantage, being upon the spot through the whole course of the affair, for giving a faithful narrative ; as I had still more eminently, from the sort of central station which I occupied, with respect to all the movements of the case. I may add that I had another advantage, not possessed, or not in the same degree, by any other

inhabitant of the town. I was personally acquainted with every family of the slightest account belonging to the resident population ; whether amongst the old local gentry, or the new settlers whom the late wars had driven to take refuge within our walls.

It was in September, 1815, that I received a letter from the chief secretary to the Prince of M——, a nobleman connected with the diplomacy of Russia, from which I quote an extract : “ I wish, in short, to recommend to your attentions, and in terms stronger than I know how to devise, a young man on whose behalf the czar himself is privately known to have expressed the very strongest interest. He was at the battle of Waterloo as an aide-de-camp to a Dutch general officer, and is decorated with distinctions won upon that awful day. However, though serving in that instance under English orders, and although an Englishman of rank, he does not belong to the English military service. He has served, young as he is, under *various* banners, and under ours, in particular, in the cavalry of our imperial guard. He is English by birth, nephew to the Earl of E., and heir presumptive to his immense estates. There is a wild story current, that his mother was a gypsy of transcendent beauty, which may account for his somewhat Moorish complexion, though, after all, *that* is not of a deeper tinge than I have seen amongst many an Englishman. He is himself one of the noblest looking of God’s creatures. Both father and mother, however, are now dead. Since then he has become the favorite of his uncle, who detained him in England after the emperor had departed — and, as this

uncle is now in the last stage of infirmity, Mr. Wyndham's succession to the vast family estates is inevitable, and probably near at hand. Meantime, he is anxious for some assistance in his studies. Intellectually he stands in the very first rank of men, as I am sure you will not be slow to discover; but his long military service, and the unparalleled tumult of our European history since 1805, have interfered (as you may suppose) with the cultivation of his mind; for he entered the cavalry service of a German power when a mere boy, and shifted about from service to service as the hurricane of war blew from this point or from that. During the French anabasis to Moscow he entered our service, made himself a prodigious favorite with the whole imperial family, and even now is only in his twenty-second year. As to his accomplishments, they will speak for themselves; they are infinite, and applicable to every situation of life. Greek is what he wants from you;—never ask about terms. He will acknowledge any trouble he may give you, as he acknowledges all trouble, *en prince*. And ten years hence you will look back with pride upon having contributed your part to the formation of one whom all here at St. Petersburg, not soldiers only, but we *diplomates*, look upon as certain to prove a great man, and a leader amongst the intellects of Christendom."

Two or three other letters followed; and at length it was arranged that Mr. Maximilian Wyndham should take up his residence at my monastic abode for one year. He was to keep a table, and an establishment of servants, at his own cost; was to have

an apartment of some dozen or so of rooms ; the unrestricted use of the library ; with some other public privileges willingly conceded by the magistracy of the town ; in return for all which he was to pay me a thousand guineas ; and already beforehand, by way of acknowledgment for the public civilities of the town, he sent, through my hands, a contribution of three hundred guineas to the various local institutions for education of the poor, or for charity.

The Russian secretary had latterly corresponded with me from a little German town, not more than ninety miles distant ; and, as he had special couriers at his service, the negotiation advanced so rapidly that all was closed before the end of September. And, when once that consummation was attained, I, that previously had breathed no syllable of what was stirring, now gave loose to the interesting tidings, and suffered them to spread through the whole compass of the town. It will be easily imagined that such a story, already romantic enough in its first outline, would lose nothing in the telling. An Englishman to begin with, which name of itself, and at all times, is a passport into German favor, but much more since the late memorable wars that but for Englishmen would have drooped into disconnected efforts—next, an Englishman of rank and of the *haute noblesse*—then a soldier covered with brilliant distinctions, and in the most brilliant arm of the service ; young, moreover, and yet a veteran by his experience—fresh from the most awful battle of this planet since the day of Pharsalia,—radiant with

the favor of courts and of imperial ladies ; finally (which alone would have given him an interest in all female hearts), an Antinous of faultless beauty, a Grecian statue, as it were, into which the breath of life had been breathed by some modern Pygmalion ;—such a pomp of gifts and endowments settling upon one man's head, should not have required for its effect the vulgar consummation (and yet to many it *was* the consummation and crest of the whole) that he was reputed to be rich beyond the dreams of romance or the necessities of a fairy tale. Unparalleled was the impression made upon our stagnant society ; every tongue was busy in discussing the marvellous young Englishman from morning to night ; every female fancy was busy in depicting the personal appearance of this gay apparition.

On his arrival at my house, I became sensible of a truth which I had observed some years before. The commonplace maxim is, that it is dangerous to raise expectations too high. This, which is thus generally expressed, and without limitation, is true only conditionally ; it is true then and there only where there is but little merit to sustain and justify the expectation. But in any case where the merit is transcendent of its kind, it is always useful to rack the expectation up to the highest point. In anything which partakes of the infinite, the most unlimited expectations will find ample room for gratification ; whilst it is certain that ordinary observers, possessing little sensibility, unless where they have been warned to expect, will often fail to see what exists in the most conspicuous splendor. In this instance

it certainly did no harm to the subject of expectation that I had been warned to look for so much. The warning, at any rate, put me on the lookout for whatever eminence there might be of grandeur in his personal appearance : whilst, on the other hand, this existed in such excess, so far transcending anything I had ever met with in my experience, that no expectation which it is in words to raise could have been disappointed.

These thoughts travelled with the rapidity of light through my brain, as at one glance my eye took in the supremacy of beauty and power which seemed to have alighted from the clouds before me. Power, and the contemplation of power, in any absolute incarnation of grandeur or excess, necessarily have the instantaneous effect of quelling all perturbation. My composure was restored in a moment. I looked steadily at him. We both bowed. And, at the moment when he raised his head from that inclination, I caught the glance of his eye ; an eye such as might have been looked for in a face of such noble lineaments —

“ Blending the nature of the star  
With that of summer skies ; ”

and, therefore, meant by nature for the residence and organ of serene and gentle emotions ; but it surprised, and at the same time filled me more almost with consternation than with pity, to observe that in those eyes a light of sadness had settled more profound than seemed possible for youth, or almost commensurate to a human sorrow ; a sadness that might



have become a Jewish prophet, when laden with inspirations of woe.

Two months had now passed away since the arrival of Mr. Wyndham. He had been universally introduced to the superior society of the place ; and, as I need hardly say, universally received with favor and distinction. In reality, his wealth and importance, his military honors, and the dignity of his character, as expressed in his manners and deportment, were too eminent to allow of his being treated with less than the highest attention in any society whatever. But the effect of these various advantages, enforced and recommended as they were by a personal beauty so rare, was somewhat too potent for the comfort and self-possession of ordinary people ; and really exceeded in a painful degree the standard of pretensions under which such people could feel themselves at their ease. He was not naturally of a reserved turn ; far from it. His disposition had been open, frank, and confiding, originally ; and his roving, adventurous life, of which considerably more than one half had been passed in camps, had communicated to his manners a more than military frankness. But the profound melancholy which possessed him, from whatever cause it arose, necessarily chilled the native freedom of his demeanor, unless when it was revived by strength of friendship or of love. The effect was awkward and embarrassing to all parties. Every voice paused or faltered when he entered a room — dead silence ensued — not an eye but was directed upon him, or else, sunk in timidity, settled upon the floor ; and young ladies seriously lost the power, for

a time, of doing more than murmuring a few confused, half-inarticulate syllables, or half-inarticulate sounds. The solemnity, in fact, of a first presentation, and the utter impossibility of soon recovering a free, unembarrassed movement of conversation, made such scenes really distressing to all who participated in them, either as actors or spectators. Certainly this result was not a pure effect of manly beauty, however heroic, and in whatever excess; it arose in part from the many and extraordinary endowments which had centred in his person, not less from fortune than from nature; in part also, as I have said, from the profound sadness and freezing gravity of Mr. Wyndham's manner; but still more from the perplexing mystery which surrounded that sadness.

Were there, then, no exceptions to this condition of awe-struck admiration? Yes; one at least there was in whose bosom the spell of all-conquering passion soon thawed every trace of icy reserve. Whilst the rest of the world retained a dim sentiment of awe towards Mr. Wyndham, Margaret Liebenheim only heard of such a feeling to wonder that it could exist towards *him*. Never was there so victorious a conquest interchanged between two youthful hearts — never before such a rapture of instantaneous sympathy. I did not witness the first meeting of this mysterious Maximilian and this magnificent Margaret, and do not know whether Margaret manifested that trepidation and embarrassment which distressed so many of her youthful co-rivals; but, if she did, it must have fled before the first glance of the young man's eye, which would interpret, past all misunder-

standing, the homage of his soul and the surrender of his heart. Their third meeting I *did* see ; and there all shadow of embarrassment had vanished, except, indeed, of that delicate embarrassment which clings to impassioned admiration. On the part of Margaret, it seemed as if a new world had dawned upon her that she had not so much as suspected amongst the capacities of human experience. Like some bird she seemed, with powers unexercised for soaring and flying, not understood even as yet, and that never until now had found an element of air capable of sustaining her wings, or tempting her to put forth her buoyant instincts. He, on the other hand, now first found the realization of his dreams, and for a mere possibility which he had long too deeply contemplated, fearing, however, that in his own case it might prove a chimera, or that he might never meet a woman answering the demands of his heart, he now found a corresponding reality that left nothing to seek.

Here, then, and thus far, nothing but happiness had resulted from the new arrangement. But, if this had been little anticipated by many, far less had I, for my part, anticipated the unhappy revolution which was wrought in the whole nature of Ferdinand von Harrelstein. He was the son of a German baron ; a man of good family, but of small estate, who had been pretty nearly a soldier of fortune in the Prussian service, and had, late in life, won sufficient favor with the king and other military superiors, to have an early prospect of obtaining a commission, under flattering auspices, for this only son — a son endeared

to him as the companion of unprosperous years, and as a dutifully affectionate child. Ferdinand had yet another hold upon his father's affections : his features preserved to the baron's unclouded remembrance a most faithful and living memorial of that angelic wife who had died in giving birth to this third child—the only one who had long survived her. Anxious that his son should go through a regular course of mathematical instruction, now becoming annually more important in all the artillery services throughout Europe, and that he should receive a tincture of other liberal studies which he had painfully missed in his own military career, the baron chose to keep his son for the last seven years at our college, until he was now entering upon his twenty-third year. For the four last he had lived with me as the sole pupil whom I had, or meant to have, had not the brilliant proposals of the young Russian guardsman persuaded me to break my resolution. Ferdinand von Harrelstein had good talents, not dazzling but respectable ; and so amiable were his temper and manners that I had introduced him everywhere, and everywhere he was a favorite ; and everywhere, indeed, except exactly there where only in this world he cared for favor. Margaret Liebenheim, she it was whom he loved, and had loved for years, with the whole ardor of his ardent soul ; she it was for whom, or at whose command, he would willingly have died. Early he had felt that in her hands lay his destiny ; that she it was who must be his good or his evil genius.

At first, and perhaps to the last, I pitied him

exceedingly. But my pity soon ceased to be mingled with respect. Before the arrival of Mr. Wyndham he had shown himself generous, indeed magnanimous. But never was there so painful an overthrow of a noble nature as manifested itself in him. I believe that he had not himself suspected the strength of his passion; and the sole resource for him, as I said often, was to quit the city — to engage in active pursuits of enterprise, of ambition, or of science. But he heard me as a somnambulist might have heard me — dreaming with his eyes open. Sometimes he had fits of reverie, starting, fearful, agitated; sometimes he broke out into maniacal movements of wrath, invoking some absent person, praying, beseeching, menacing some air-wove phantom; sometimes he slunk into solitary corners, muttering to himself, and with gestures sorrowfully significant, or with tones and fragments of expostulation that moved the most callous to compassion. Still he turned a deaf ear to the only practical counsel that had a chance for reaching his ears. Like a bird under the fascination of a rattlesnake, he would not summon up the energies of his nature to make an effort at flying away. “Begone, whilst it is time!” said others, as well as myself; for more than I saw enough to fear some fearful catastrophe. “Lead us not into temptation!” said his confessor to him in my hearing (for, though Prussians, the Von Harrelsteins were Roman Catholics), “lead us not into temptation! — that is our daily prayer to God. Then, my son, being led into temptation, do not you persist in courting, nay, almost tempting temptation. Try the effects of absence,

though but for a month." The good father even made an overture towards imposing a penance upon him, that would have involved an absence of some duration. But he was obliged to desist; for he saw that, without effecting any good, he would merely add spiritual disobedience to the other offences of the young man. Ferdinand himself drew his attention to *this*; for he said: "Reverend father! do not you, with the purpose of removing me from temptation, be yourself the instrument for tempting me into a rebellion against the church. Do not you weave snares about my steps; snares there are already, and but too many." The old man sighed, and desisted.

Then came — But enough! From pity, from sympathy, from counsel, and from consolation, and from scorn — from each of these alike the poor stricken deer "recoiled into the wilderness;" he fled for days together into solitary parts of the forest; fled, as I still hoped and prayed, in good earnest and for a long farewell; but, alas! no: still he returned to the haunts of his ruined happiness and his buried hopes, at each return looking more like the wreck of his former self; and once I heard a penetrating monk observe, whose convent stood near the city gates: "There goes one ready equally for doing or suffering, and of whom we shall soon hear that he is involved in some great catastrophe — it may be of deep calamity — it may be of memorable guilt."

So stood matters amongst us. January was drawing to its close; the weather was growing more and more winterly; high winds, piercingly cold, were

raving through our narrow streets; and still the spirit of social festivity bade defiance to the storms which sang through our ancient forests. From the accident of our magistracy being selected from the tradesmen of the city, the hospitalities of the place were far more extensive than would otherwise have happened; for every member of the corporation gave two annual entertainments in his official character. And such was the rivalry which prevailed, that often one quarter of the year's income was spent upon these galas. Nor was any ridicule thus incurred; for the costliness of the entertainment was understood to be an expression of *official* pride, done in honor of the city, not as an effort of personal display. It followed, from the spirit in which these half-yearly dances originated, that, being given on the part of the city, every stranger of rank was marked out as a privileged guest, and the hospitality of the community would have been equally affronted by failing to offer or by failing to accept the invitation.

Hence it had happened that the Russian guardsman had been introduced into many a family which otherwise could not have hoped for such a distinction. Upon the evening at which I am now arrived, the twenty-second of January, 1816, the whole city, in its wealthier classes, was assembled beneath the roof of a tradesman who had the heart of a prince. In every point our entertainment was superb; and I remarked that the music was the finest I had heard for years. Our host was in joyous spirits; proud to survey the splendid company he had gathered under

his roof; happy to witness their happiness; elated in their elation. Joyous was the dance—joyous were all faces that I saw—up to midnight, very soon after which time supper was announced; and that also, I think, was the most joyous of all the banquets I ever witnessed. The accomplished guardsman outshone himself in brilliancy; even his melancholy relaxed. In fact, how could it be otherwise? near to him sat Margaret Liebenheim—hanging upon his words—more lustrous and bewitching than ever I had beheld her. There she had been placed by the host; and everybody knew why. That is one of the luxuries attached to love; all men cede their places with pleasure; women make way. Even she herself knew, though not obliged to know, why she was seated in that neighborhood; and took her place, if with a rosy suffusion upon her cheeks, yet with fulness of happiness at her heart.

The guardsman pressed forward to claim Miss Liebenheim's hand for the next dance; a movement which she was quick to favor, by retreating behind one or two parties from a person who seemed coming towards her. The music again began to pour its voluptuous tides through the bounding pulses of the youthful company; again the flying feet of the dancers began to respond to the measures; again the mounting spirit of delight began to fill the sails of the hurrying night with steady inspiration. All went happily. Already had one dance finished; some were pacing up and down, leaning on the arms of their partners; some were reposing from their



exertions ; when — O heavens ! what a shriek ! what a gathering tumult !

Every eye was bent towards the doors — every eye strained forwards to discover what was passing. But there, every moment, less and less could be seen, for the gathering crowd more and more intercepted the view ; — so much the more was the ear at leisure for the shrieks redoubled upon shrieks. Miss Liebenheim had moved downwards to the crowd. From her superior height she overlooked all the ladies at the point where she stood. In the centre stood a rustic girl, whose features had been familiar to her for some months. She had recently come into the city, and had lived with her uncle, a tradesman, not ten doors from Margaret's own residence, partly on the terms of a kinswoman, partly as a servant on trial. At this moment she was exhausted with excitement, and the nature of the shock she had sustained. Mere panic seemed to have mastered her ; and she was leaning, unconscious and weeping, upon the shoulder of some gentleman, who was endeavoring to soothe her. A silence of horror seemed to possess the company, most of whom were still unacquainted with the cause of the alarming interruption. A few, however, who had heard her first agitated words, finding that they waited in vain for a fuller explanation, now rushed tumultuously out of the ball-room to satisfy themselves on the spot. The distance was not great ; and within five minutes several persons returned hastily, and cried out to the crowd of ladies that all was true which the young girl had said. " What was true ? "

That her uncle Mr. Weishaupt's family had been murdered ; that not one member of the family had been spared — namely, Mr. Weishaupt himself and his wife, neither of them much above sixty, but both infirm beyond their years ; two maiden sisters of Mr. Weishaupt, from forty to forty-six years of age, and an elderly female domestic.

An incident happened during the recital of these horrors, and of the details which followed, that furnished matter for conversation even in these hours when so thrilling an interest had possession of all minds. Many ladies fainted ; amongst them Miss Liebenheim — and she would have fallen to the ground but for Maximilian, who sprang forward and caught her in his arms. She was long of returning to herself ; and, during the agony of his suspense, he stooped and kissed her pallid lips. That sight was more than could be borne by one who stood a little behind the group. He rushed forward, with eyes glaring like a tiger's, and levelled, a blow at Maximilian. It was poor, maniacal Von Harrelstein, who had been absent in the forest for a week. Many people stepped forward and checked his arm, uplifted for a repetition of this outrage. One or two had some influence with him, and led him away from the spot ; whilst as to Maximilian, so absorbed was he that he had not so much as perceived the affront offered to himself. Margaret, on reviving, was confounded at finding herself so situated amidst a great crowd ; and yet the prudes complained that there was a look of love exchanged between herself and Maximilian, that ought not to have escaped her

in such a situation. If they meant by such a situation, one so public, it must be also recollected that it was a situation of excessive agitation; but, if they alluded to the horrors of the moment, no situation more naturally opens the heart to affection and confiding love than the recoil from scenes of exquisite terror.

An examination went on that night before the magistrates, but all was dark; although suspicion attached to a negro named Aaron, who had occasionally been employed in menial services by the family, and had been in the house immediately before the murder. The circumstances were such as to leave every man in utter perplexity as to the presumption for and against him. His mode of defending himself, and his general deportment, were marked by the coolest, nay, the most sneering indifference. The first thing he did, on being acquainted with the suspicions against himself, was to laugh ferociously, and to all appearance most cordially and unaffectedly. He demanded whether a poor man like himself would have left so much wealth as lay scattered abroad in that house—gold repeaters, massy plate, gold snuff-boxes—untouched? That argument certainly weighed much in his favor. And yet again it was turned against him; for a magistrate asked him how *he* happened to know already that nothing had been touched. True it was, and a fact which had puzzled no less than it had awed the magistrates, that, upon their examination of the premises, many rich articles of *bijouterie*, jewellery, and personal ornaments, had been found

lying underanged, and apparently in their usual situations; articles so portable that in the very hastiest flight some might have been carried off. In particular, there was a crucifix of gold, enriched with jewels so large and rare, that of itself it would have constituted a prize of great magnitude. Yet this was left untouched, though suspended in a little oratory that had been magnificently adorned by the elder of the maiden sisters. There was an altar, in itself a splendid object, furnished with every article of the most costly material and workmanship, for the private celebration of mass. This crucifix, as well as everything else in the little closet, must have been seen by one at least of the murderous party; for hither had one of the ladies fled; hither had one of the murderers pursued. She had clasped the golden pillars which supported the altar—had turned perhaps her dying looks upon the crucifix; for there, with one arm still wreathed about the altar-foot, though in her agony she had turned round upon her face, did the elder sister lie when the magistrates first broke open the street-door. And upon the beautiful *parquet*, or inlaid floor which ran round the room, were still impressed the footsteps of the murderer. These, it was hoped, might furnish a clue to the discovery of one at least among the murderous band. They were rather difficult to trace accurately; those parts of the traces which lay upon the black *tessellæ* being less distinct in the outline than the others upon the white or colored. Most unquestionably, so far as this went, it furnished a negative circumstance in favor of the

negro, for the footsteps were very different in outline from his, and smaller, for Aaron was a man of colossal build. And as to his knowledge of the state in which the premises had been found, and his having so familiarly relied upon the fact of no robbery having taken place as an argument on his own behalf, he contended that he had himself been amongst the crowd that pushed into the house along with the magistrates; that, from his previous acquaintance with the rooms and their ordinary condition, a glance of the eye had been sufficient for him to ascertain the undisturbed condition of all the valuable property most obvious to the grasp of a robber; that, in fact, he had seen enough for his argument before he and the rest of the mob had been ejected by the magistrates; but, finally, that independently of all this, he had heard both the officers, as they conducted him, and all the tumultuous gatherings of people in the street, arguing for the mysteriousness of the bloody transaction upon that very circumstance of so much gold, silver, and jewels, being left behind untouched.

In six weeks or less from the date of this terrific event, the negro was set at liberty by a majority of voices amongst the magistrates. In that short interval other events had occurred no less terrific and mysterious. In this first murder, though the motive was dark and unintelligible, yet the agency was not so; ordinary assassins apparently, and with ordinary means, had assailed a helpless and unprepared family; had separated them; attacked them singly in flight (for in this first case all but one of

the murdered persons appeared to have been making for the street-door); and in all this there was no subject for wonder, except the original one as to the motive. But now came a series of cases destined to fling this earliest murder into the shade. Nobody could now be unprepared; and yet the tragedies, henceforwards, which passed before us, one by one, in sad, leisurely, or in terrific groups, seemed to argue a lethargy like that of apoplexy in the victims, one and all. The very midnight of mysterious awe fell upon all minds.

Three weeks had passed since the murder at Mr. Weishaupt's—three weeks the most agitated that had been known in this sequestered city. We felt ourselves solitary, and thrown upon our own resources; all combination with other towns being unavailing from their great distance. Our situation was no ordinary one. Had there been some mysterious robbers amongst us, the chances of a visit, divided amongst so many, would have been too small to distress the most timid; whilst to young and high-spirited people, with courage to spare for ordinary trials, such a state of expectation would have sent pulses of pleasurable anxiety amongst the nerves. But murderers! exterminating murderers!—clothed in mystery and utter darkness—these were objects too terrific for any family to contemplate with fortitude. Had these very murderers added to their functions those of robbery, they would have become less terrific; nine out of every ten would have found themselves discharged, as it were, from the roll of those who were liable to a visit; while such

as knew themselves liable would have had warning of their danger in the fact of being rich ; and would, from the very riches which constituted that danger, have derived the means of repelling it. But, as things were, no man could guess what it was that must make him obnoxious to the murderers. Imagination exhausted itself in vain guesses at the causes which could by possibility have made the poor Weishaupts objects of such hatred to any man. True, they were bigoted in a degree which indicated feebleness of intellect ; but *that* wounded no man in particular, whilst to many it recommended them. True, their charity was narrow and exclusive, but to those of their own religious body it expanded munificently ; and, being rich beyond their wants, or any means of employing wealth which their gloomy asceticism allowed, they had the power of doing a great deal of good amongst the indigent papists of the suburbs. As to the old gentleman and his wife, their infirmities confined them to the house. Nobody remembered to have seen them abroad for years. How, therefore, or when could they have made an enemy ? And, with respect to the maiden sisters of Mr. Weishaupt, they were simply weak-minded persons, now and then too censorious, but not placed in a situation to incur serious anger from any quarter, and too little heard of in society to occupy much of anybody's attention.

Conceive, then, that three weeks have passed away, that the poor Weishaupts have been laid in that narrow sanctuary which no murderer's voice will ever violate. Quiet has not returned to us, but

the first flutterings of panic have subsided. People are beginning to respire freely again; and such another space of time would have cicatrized our wounds—when, hark! a church-bell rings out a loud alarm;—the night is starlight and frosty—the iron notes are heard clear, solemn, but agitated. What could this mean? I hurried to a room over the porter's lodge, and, opening the window, I cried out to a man passing hastily below, "What, in God's name, is the meaning of this?" It was a watchman belonging to our district. I knew his voice, he knew mine, and he replied in great agitation:

"It is another murder, sir, at the old town councillor's, Albernass; and this time they have made a clear house of it."

"God preserve us! Has a curse been pronounced upon this city? What can be done? What are the magistrates going to do?"

"I don't know, sir. I have orders to run to the Black Friars, where another meeting is gathering. Shall I say you will attend, sir?"

"Yes — no — stop a little. No matter, you may go on; I'll follow immediately."

I went instantly to Maximilian's room. He was lying asleep on a sofa, at which I was not surprised, for there had been a severe stag-chase in the morning. Even at this moment I found myself arrested by two objects, and I paused to survey them. One was Maximilian himself. A person so mysterious took precedence of other interests even at a time like this; and especially by his features, which, com-



posed in profound sleep, as sometimes happens, assumed a new expression, which arrested me chiefly by awaking some confused remembrance of the same features seen under other circumstances and in times long past ; but where ? This was what I could not recollect, though once before a thought of the same sort had crossed my mind. The other object of my interest was a miniature, which Maximilian was holding in his hand. He had gone to sleep apparently looking at this picture ; and the hand which held it had slipped down upon the sofa, so that it was in danger of falling. I released the miniature from his hand, and surveyed it attentively. It represented a lady of sunny, oriental complexion, and features the most noble that it is possible to conceive. One might have imagined such a lady, with her raven locks and imperial eyes, to be the favorite sultana of some Amurath or Mohammed. What was she to Maximilian, or what *had* she been ? For, by the tear which I had once seen him drop upon this miniature when he believed himself unobserved, I conjectured that her dark tresses were already laid low, and her name among the list of vanished things. Probably she was his mother, for the dress was rich with pearls, and evidently that of a person in the highest rank of court beauties. I sighed as I thought of the stern melancholy of her son, if Maximilian were he, as connected, probably, with the fate and fortunes of this majestic beauty ; somewhat haughty, perhaps, in the expression of her fine features, but still noble — generous — confiding. Laying the picture on the table, I awoke

Maximilian, and told him of the dreadful news. He listened attentively, made no remark, but proposed that we should go together to the meeting of our quarter at the Black Friars. He colored upon observing the miniature on the table; and, therefore, I frankly told him in what situation I had found it, and that I had taken the liberty of admiring it for a few moments. He pressed it tenderly to his lips, sighed heavily, and we walked away together.

I pass over the frenzied state of feeling in which we found the meeting. Fear, or rather horror, did not promote harmony; many quarrelled with each other in discussing the suggestions brought forward, and Maximilian was the only person attended to. He proposed a nightly mounted patrol for every district. And in particular he offered, as being himself a member of the university, that the students should form themselves into a guard, and go out by rotation to keep watch and ward from sunset to sunrise. Arrangements were made towards that object by the few people who retained possession of their senses, and for the present we separated.

Never, in fact, did any events so keenly try the difference between man and man. Some started up into heroes under the excitement. Some, alas for the dignity of man! drooped into helpless imbecility. Women, in some cases, rose superior to men, but yet not so often as might have happened under a less mysterious danger. A woman is not unwomanly because she confronts danger boldly. But I have remarked, with respect to female courage, that it requires, more than that of men, to be sustained by

hope ; and that it droops more certainly in the presence of a *mysterious* danger. The fancy of women is more active, if not stronger, and it influences more directly the physical nature. In this case few were the women who made even a show of defying the danger. On the contrary, with *them* fear took the form of sadness, while with many of the men it took that of wrath.

And how did the Russian guardsman conduct himself amidst this panic ? Many were surprised at his behavior ; some complained of it ; I did neither. He took a reasonable interest in each separate case, listened to the details with attention, and, in the examination of persons able to furnish evidence, never failed to suggest judicious questions. But still he manifested a coolness almost amounting to carelessness, which to many appeared revolting. But these people I desired to notice that all the other military students, who had been long in the army, felt exactly in the same way. In fact, the military service of Christendom, for the last ten years, had been anything but a parade service ; and to those, therefore, who were familiar with every form of horrid butchery, the mere outside horrors of death had lost much of their terror. In the recent murder there had not been much to call forth sympathy. The family consisted of two old bachelors, two sisters, and one grand niece. The niece was absent on a visit, and the two old men were cynical misers, to whom little personal interest attached. Still, in this case as in that of the Weishaupts, the same twofold mystery confounded the public mind — the mystery of the *how*,

and the profounder mystery of the *why*. Here, again, no atom of property was taken, though both the misers had hordes of ducats and English guineas in the very room where they died. Their bias, again, though of an unpopular character, had rather availed to make them unknown than to make them hateful. In one point this case differed memorably from the other — that, instead of falling helpless, or flying victims (as the Weishaupts had done), these old men, strong, resolute, and not so much taken by surprise, left proofs that they had made a desperate defence. The furniture was partly smashed to pieces, and the other details furnished evidence still more revolting of the *acharnement* with which the struggle had been maintained. In fact, with *them* a surprise must have been impracticable, as they admitted nobody into their house on visiting terms. It was thought singular that from each of these domestic tragedies a benefit of the same sort should result to young persons standing in nearly the same relation. The girl who gave the alarm at the ball, with two little sisters, and a little orphan nephew, their cousin, divided the very large inheritance of the Weishaupts; and in this latter case the accumulated savings of two long lives all vested in the person of the amiable grand niece.

But now, as if in mockery of all our anxious consultations and elaborate devices, three fresh murders took place on the two consecutive nights succeeding these new arrangements. And in one case, as nearly as time could be noted, the mounted patrol must have been within call at the very moment when the

awful work was going on. I shall not dwell much upon them ; but a few circumstances are too interesting to be passed over. The earliest case on the first of the two nights was that of a currier. He was fifty years old ; not rich, but well off. His first wife was dead, and his daughters by her were married away from their father's house. He had married a second wife, but, having no children by her, and keeping no servants, it is probable that, but for an accident, no third person would have been in the house at the time when the murderers got admittance. About seven o'clock, a wayfaring man, a journeyman currier, who, according to our German system, was now in his *wanderjahre*, entered the city from the forest. At the gate he made some inquiries about the curriers and tanners of our town ; and, agreeably to the information he received, made his way to this Mr. Heinberg. Mr. Heinberg refused to admit him, until he mentioned his errand, and pushed below the door a letter of recommendation from a Silesian correspondent, describing him as an excellent and steady workman. Wanting such a man, and satisfied by the answers returned that he was what he represented himself, Mr. Heinberg unbolted his door and admitted him. Then, after slipping the bolt into its place, he bade him sit to the fire, brought him a glass of beer, conversed with him for ten minutes, and said : " You had better stay here to-night ; I'll tell you why afterwards ; but now I'll step up stairs, and ask my wife whether she can make up a bed for you ; and do you mind the door whilst I'm away." So saying, he went out of the room.

Not one minute had he been gone when there came a gentle knock at the door. It was raining heavily, and, being a stranger to the city, not dreaming that in any crowded town such a state of things could exist as really did in this, the young man, without hesitation, admitted the person knocking. He has declared since — but, perhaps, confounding the feelings gained from better knowledge with the feelings of the moment — that from the moment he drew the bolt he had a misgiving that he had done wrong. A man entered in a horseman's cloak, and so muffled up that the journeyman could discover none of his features. In a low tone the stranger said, "Where 's Heinberg?" — "Up stairs." — "Call him down, then." The journeyman went to the door by which Mr. Heinberg had left him, and called, "Mr. Heinberg, here 's one wanting you!" Mr. Heinberg heard him, for the man could distinctly catch these words: "God bless me! has the man opened the door? O, the traitor! I see it." Upon this he felt more and more consternation, though not knowing why. Just then he heard a sound of feet behind him. On turning round, he beheld three more men in the room; one was fastening the outer door; one was drawing some arms from a cupboard, and two others were whispering together. He himself was disturbed and perplexed, and felt that all was not right. Such was his confusion, that either all the men's faces must have been muffled up, or at least he remembered nothing distinctly but one fierce pair of eyes glaring upon him. Then, before he could look round, came a man from behind and

threw a sack over his head, which was drawn tight about his waist, so as to confine his arms, as well as to impede his hearing in part, and his voice altogether. He was then pushed into a room ; but previously he had heard a rush up stairs, and words like those of a person exulting, and then a door closed. Once it opened, and he could distinguish the words, in one voice, " And for *that* ! " to which another voice replied, in tones that made his heart quake, " Ay, for *that*, sir." And then the same voice went on rapidly to say, " O, dog ! could you hope " — at which word the door closed again. Once he thought that he heard a scuffle, and he was sure that he heard the sound of feet, as if rushing from one corner of a room to another. But then all was hushed and still for about six or seven minutes, until a voice close to his ear said, " Now, wait quietly till some persons come in to release you. This will happen within half an hour." Accordingly, in less than that time, he again heard the sound of feet within the house, his own bandages were liberated, and he was brought to tell his story at the police-office. Mr. Heinberg was found in his bedroom. He had died by strangulation, and the cord was still tightened about his neck. During the whole dreadful scene his youthful wife had been locked into a closet, where she heard or saw nothing.

In the second case, the object of vengeance was again an elderly man. Of the ordinary family, all were absent at a country-house, except the master and a female servant. She was a woman of courage, and blessed with the firmest nerves ; so that she

might have been relied on for reporting accurately everything seen or heard. But things took another course. The first warning that she had of the murderers' presence was from their steps and voices already in the hall. She heard her master run hastily into the hall, crying out, "Lord Jesus!—Mary, Mary, save me!" The servant resolved to give what aid she could, seized a large poker, and was hurrying to his assistance, when she found that they had nailed up the door of communication at the head of the stairs. What passed after this she could not tell; for, when the impulse of intrepid fidelity had been balked, and she found that her own safety was provided for by means which made it impossible to aid a poor fellow-creature who had just invoked her name, the generous-hearted creature was overcome by anguish of mind, and sank down on the stair, where she lay, unconscious of all that succeeded, until she found herself raised in the arms of a mob who had entered the house. And how came they to have entered? In a way characteristically dreadful. The night was star-lit; the patrols had perambulated the street without noticing anything suspicious, when two foot-passengers, who were following in their rear, observed a dark-colored stream traversing the causeway. One of them, at the same instant tracing the stream backwards with his eyes, observed that it flowed from under the door of Mr. Munzer, and, dipping his finger in the trickling fluid, he held it up to the lamp-light, yelling out at the moment, "Why, this is blood!" It was so, indeed, and it was yet warm. The other saw, heard, and like an



arrow flew after the horse-patrol, then in the act of turning the corner. One cry, full of meaning, was sufficient for ears full of expectation. The horsemen pulled up, wheeled, and in another moment reined up at Mr. Munzer's door. The crowd, gathering like the drifting of snow, supplied implements which soon forced the chains of the door and all other obstacles. But the murderous party had escaped, and all traces of their persons had vanished, as usual.

Rarely did any case occur without some peculiarity more or less interesting. In that which happened on the following night, making the fifth in the series, an impressive incident varied the monotony of horrors. In this case the parties aimed at were two elderly ladies, who conducted a female boarding-school. None of the pupils had as yet returned to school from their vacation; but two sisters, young girls of thirteen and sixteen, coming from a distance, had staid at school throughout the Christmas holidays. It was the youngest of these who gave the only evidence of any value, and one which added a new feature of alarm to the existing panic. Thus it was that her testimony was given: On the day before the murder, she and her sister were sitting with the old ladies in a room fronting to the street; the elder ladies were reading, the younger ones drawing. Louisa, the youngest, never had her ear inattentive to the slightest sound, and once it struck her that she heard the creaking of a foot upon the stairs. She said nothing, but, slipping out of the room, she ascertained that the two female servants were in the

kitchen, and could not have been absent; that all the doors and windows, by which ingress was possible, were not only locked, but bolted and barred — a fact which excluded all possibility of invasion by means of false keys. Still she felt persuaded that she had heard the sound of a heavy foot upon the stairs. It was, however, daylight, and this gave her confidence; so that, without communicating her alarm to anybody, she found courage to traverse the house in every direction; and, as nothing was either seen or heard, she concluded that her ears had been too sensitively awake. Yet that night, as she lay in bed, dim terrors assailed her, especially because she considered that, in so large a house, some closet or other might have been overlooked, and, in particular, she did not remember to have examined one or two chests, in which a man could have lain concealed. Through the greater part of the night she lay awake; but as one of the town clocks struck four, she dismissed her anxieties, and fell asleep. The next day, wearied with this unusual watching, she proposed to her sister that they should go to bed earlier than usual. This they did; and, on their way up stairs, Louisa happened to think suddenly of a heavy cloak, which would improve the coverings of her bed against the severity of the night. The cloak was hanging up in a closet within a closet, both leading off from a large room used as the young ladies' dancing-school. These closets she had examined on the previous day, and therefore she felt no particular alarm at this moment. The cloak was the first article which met her sight; it was suspended from a hook in the wall, and

close to the door. She took it down, but, in doing so, exposed part of the wall and of the floor, which its folds had previously concealed. Turning away hastily, the chances were that she had gone without making any discovery. In the act of turning, however, her light fell brightly on a man's foot and leg. Matchless was her presence of mind; having previously been humming an air, she continued to do so. But now came the trial; her sister was bending her steps to the same closet. If she suffered her to do so, Lottchen would stumble on the same discovery, and expire of fright. On the other hand, if she gave her a hint, Lottchen would either fail to understand her, or, gaining but a glimpse of her meaning, would shriek aloud, or by some equally decisive expression convey the fatal news to the assassin that he had been discovered. In this torturing dilemma fear prompted an expedient, which to Lottchen appeared madness, and to Louisa herself the act of a sibyl instinct with blind inspiration. "Here," said she, "is our dancing-room. When shall we all meet and dance again together?" Saying which, she commenced a wild dance, whirling her candle round her head until the motion extinguished it; then, eddying round her sister in narrowing circles, she seized Lottchen's candle also, blew it out, and then interrupted her own singing to attempt a laugh. But the laugh was hysterical. The darkness, however, favored her; and, seizing her sister's arm, she forced her along, whispering, "Come, come, come!" Lottchen could not be so dull as entirely to misunderstand her. She suffered herself to be led up the first flight

of stairs, at the head of which was a room looking into the street. In this they would have gained an asylum, for the door had a strong bolt. But, as they were on the last steps of the landing, they could hear the hard breathing and long strides of the murderer ascending behind them. He had watched them through a crevice, and had been satisfied by the hysterical laugh of Louisa that she had seen him. In the darkness he could not follow fast, from ignorance of the localities, until he found himself upon the stairs. Louisa, dragging her sister along, felt strong as with the strength of lunacy, but Lottchen hung like a weight of lead upon her. She rushed into the room, but at the very entrance Lottchen fell. At that moment the assassin exchanged his stealthy pace for a loud clattering ascent. Already he was on the topmost stair; already he was throwing himself at a bound against the door, when Louisa, having dragged her sister into the room, closed the door and sent the bolt home in the very instant that the murderer's hand came into contact with the handle. Then, from the violence of her emotions, she fell down in a fit, with her arm around the sister whom she had saved.

How long they lay in this state neither ever knew. The two old ladies had rushed up stairs on hearing the tumult. Other persons had been concealed in other parts of the house. The servants found themselves suddenly locked in, and were not sorry to be saved from a collision which involved so awful a danger. The old ladies had rushed, side by side, into the very centre of those who were seeking them.

Retreat was impossible ; two persons at least were heard following them up stairs. Something like a shrieking expostulation and counter-expostulation went on between the ladies and the murderers ; then came louder voices — then one heart-piercing shriek, and then another — and then a slow moaning and a dead silence. Shortly afterwards was heard the first crashing of the door inwards by the mob ; but the murderers had fled upon the first alarm, and, to the astonishment of the servants, had fled upwards. Examination, however, explained this : from a window in the roof they had passed to an adjoining house recently left empty ; and here, as in other cases, we had proof how apt people are, in the midst of elaborate provisions against remote dangers, to neglect those which are obvious.

The reign of terror, it may be supposed, had now reached its *acmé*. The two old ladies were both lying dead at different points on the staircase, and, as usual, no conjecture could be made as to the nature of the offence which they had given ; but that the murder *was* a vindictive one, the usual evidence remained behind, in the proofs that no robbery had been attempted. Two new features, however, were now brought forward in this system of horrors, one of which riveted the sense of their insecurity to all families occupying extensive houses, and the other raised ill blood between the city and the university, such as required years to allay. The first arose out of the experience, now first obtained, that these assassins pursued the plan of secreting themselves within the house where they meditated a murder.

All the care, therefore, previously directed to the securing of doors and windows after nightfall appeared nugatory. The other feature brought to light on this occasion was vouched for by one of the servants, who declared that, the moment before the door of the kitchen was fastened upon herself and fellow-servant, she saw two men in the hall, one on the point of ascending the stairs, the other making towards the kitchen ; that she could not distinguish the faces of either, but that both were dressed in the academic costume belonging to the students of the university. The consequences of such a declaration need scarcely be mentioned. Suspicion settled upon the students, who were more numerous since the general peace, in a much larger proportion military, and less select or respectable than heretofore. Still, no part of the mystery was cleared up by this discovery. Many of the students were poor enough to feel the temptation that might be offered by any *lucrative* system of outrage. Jealous and painful collusions were, in the mean time, produced ; and, during the latter two months of this winter, it may be said that our city exhibited the very anarchy of evil passions. This condition of things lasted until the dawning of another spring.

It will be supposed that communications were made to the supreme government of the land as soon as the murders in our city were understood to be no casual occurrences, but links in a systematic series. Perhaps it might happen from some other business, of a higher kind, just then engaging the attention of our governors, that our representations did not make

the impression we had expected. We could not, indeed, complain of absolute neglect from the government. They sent down one or two of their most accomplished police-officers, and they suggested some counsels, especially that we should examine more strictly into the quality of the miscellaneous population who occupied our large suburb. But they more than hinted that no necessity was seen either for quartering troops upon us, or for arming our local magistracy with ampler powers.

This correspondence with the central government occupied the month of March, and, before that time, the bloody system had ceased as abruptly as it began. The new police-officer flattered himself that the terror of his name had wrought this effect; but judicious people thought otherwise. All, however, was quiet until the depth of summer, when, by way of hinting to us, perhaps, that the dreadful power which clothed itself with darkness had not expired, but was only reposing from its labors, all at once the chief jailer of the city was missing. He had been in the habit of taking long rides in the forest, his present situation being much of a sinecure. It was on the first of July that he was missed. In riding through the city gates that morning, he had mentioned the direction which he meant to pursue; and the last time he was seen alive was in one of the forest avenues, about eight miles from the city, leading towards the point he had indicated. This jailer was not a man to be regretted on his own account; his life had been a tissue of cruelty and brutal abuse of his powers, in which he had been too much sup-

ported by the magistrates, partly on the plea that it was their duty to back their own officers against all complainers, partly also from the necessities created by the turbulent times for a more summary exercise of their magisterial authority. No man, therefore, on his own separate account, could more willingly have been spared than this brutal jailer ; and it was a general remark that, had the murderous band within our walls swept away this man only, they would have merited the public gratitude as purifiers from a public nuisance. But was it certain that the jailer had died by the same hands as had so deeply afflicted the peace of our city during the winter — or, indeed, that he had been murdered at all ? The forest was too extensive to be searched ; and it was possible that he might have met with some fatal accident. His horse had returned to the city gates in the night, and was found there in the morning. Nobody, however, for months could give information about his rider ; and it seemed probable that he would not be discovered until the autumn and the winter should again carry the sportsman into every thicket and dingle of this sylvan tract. One person only seemed to have more knowledge on this subject than others, and that was poor Ferdinand von Harrelstein. He was now a mere ruin of what he had once been, both as to intellect and moral feeling ; and I observed him frequently smile when the jailer was mentioned. “ Wait,” he would say, “ till the leaves begin to drop ; then you will see what fine fruit our forest bears.” I did not repeat these expressions to anybody except one friend, who agreed with me that the



jailer had probably been hanged in some recess of the forest, which summer veiled with its luxuriant umbrage ; and that Ferdinand, constantly wandering in the forest, had discovered the body ; but we both acquitted him of having been an accomplice in the murder.

Meantime the marriage between Margaret Liebenheim and Maximilian was understood to be drawing near. Yet one thing struck everybody with astonishment. As far as the young people were concerned, nobody could doubt that all was arranged ; for never was happiness more perfect than that which seemed to unite them. Margaret was the impersonation of May-time and youthful rapture ; even Maximilian in her presence seemed to forget his gloom, and the worm which gnawed at his heart was charmed asleep by the music of her voice, and the paradise of her smiles. But, until the autumn came, Margaret's grandfather had never ceased to frown upon this connection, and to support the pretensions of Ferdinand. The dislike, indeed, seemed reciprocal between him and Maximilian. Each avoided the other's company ; and as to the old man, he went so far as to speak sneeringly of Maximilian. Maximilian despised him too heartily to speak of him at all. When he could not avoid meeting him, he treated him with a stern courtesy, which distressed Margaret as often as she witnessed it. She felt that her grandfather had been the aggressor ; and she felt also that he did injustice to the merits of her lover. But she had a filial tenderness for the old man, as the father of her sainted mother, and on his own account

continually making more claims on her pity, as the decay of his memory, and a childish fretfulness growing upon him from day to day, marked his increasing imbecility.

Equally mysterious it seemed, that about this time Miss Liebenheim began to receive anonymous letters, written in the darkest and most menacing terms. Some of them she showed to me. I could not guess at their drift. Evidently they glanced at Maximilian, and bade her beware of connection with him; and dreadful things were insinuated about him. Could these letters be written by Ferdinand? Written they were not, but could they be dictated by him? Much I feared that they were; and the more so for one reason.

All at once, and most inexplicably, Margaret's grandfather showed a total change of opinion in his views as to her marriage. Instead of favoring Harrelstein's pretensions, as he had hitherto done, he now threw the feeble weight of his encouragement into Maximilian's scale; though, from the situation of all the parties, nobody attached any *practical* importance to the change in Mr. Liebenheim's way of thinking. Nobody? Is that true? No; one person *did* attach the greatest weight to the change—poor, ruined Ferdinand. He, so long as there was one person to take his part, so long as the grandfather of Margaret showed countenance to himself, had still felt his situation not utterly desperate.

Thus were things situated, when in November, all the leaves daily blowing off from the woods, and leaving bare the most secret haunts of the thickets,

the body of the jailer was left exposed in the forest ; but not, as I and my friend had conjectured, hanged. No ; he had died apparently by a more horrid death—by that of crucifixion. The tree, a remarkable one, bore upon a part of its trunk this brief but savage inscription :—“ T. H., jailer at ——— ; *Crucified July 1, 1816.*”

A great deal of talk went on throughout the city upon this discovery ; nobody uttered one word of regret on account of the wretched jailer ; on the contrary, the voice of vengeance, rising up in many a cottage, reached my ears in every direction as I walked abroad. The hatred in itself seemed horrid and unchristian, and still more so after the man’s death ; but, though horrid and fiendish for itself, it was much more impressive, considered as the measure and exponent of the damnable oppression which must have existed to produce it.

At first, when the absence of the jailer was a recent occurrence, and the presence of the murderers amongst us was, in consequence, revived to our anxious thoughts, it was an event which few alluded to without fear. But matters were changed now ; the jailer had been dead for months, and this interval, during which the murderer’s hand had slept, encouraged everybody to hope that the storm had passed over our city ; that peace had returned to our hearths ; and that henceforth weakness might sleep in safety, and innocence without anxiety. Once more we had peace within our walls, and tranquillity by our firesides. Again the child went to bed in cheerfulness, and the old man said his prayers in

serenity. Confidence was restored; peace was re-established; and once again the sanctity of human life became the rule and the principle for all human hands amongst us. Great was the joy; the happiness was universal.

O, heavens! by what a thunderbolt were we awakened from our security! On the night of the twenty-seventh of December, half an hour, it might be, after twelve o'clock, an alarm was given that all was not right in the house of Mr. Liebenheim. Vast was the crowd which soon collected in breathless agitation. In two minutes a man who had gone round by the back of the house was heard unbarring Mr. Liebenheim's door: he was incapable of uttering a word; but his gestures, as he threw the door open and beckoned to the crowd, were quite enough. In the hall, at the further extremity, and as if arrested in the act of making for the back door, lay the bodies of old Mr. Liebenheim and one of his sisters, an aged widow; on the stair lay another sister, younger and unmarried, but upwards of sixty. The hall and lower flight of stairs were floating with blood. Where, then, was Miss Liebenheim, the grand-daughter? That was the universal cry; for she was beloved as generally as she was admired. Had the infernal murderers been devilish enough to break into that temple of innocent and happy life? Every one asked the question, and every one held his breath to listen; but for a few moments no one dared to advance; for the silence of the house was ominous. At length some one cried out that Miss Liebenheim had that day gone upon a visit to a friend, whose

house was forty miles distant in the forest. "Ay," replied another, "she had settled to go; but I heard that something had stopped her." The suspense was now at its height, and the crowd passed from room to room, but found no traces of Miss Liebenheim. At length they ascended the stair, and in the very first room, a small closet, or *boudoir*, lay Margaret, with her dress soiled hideously with blood. The first impression was that she also had been murdered; but, on a nearer approach, she appeared to be unwounded, and was manifestly alive. Life had not departed, for her breath sent a haze over a mirror, but it was suspended, and she was laboring in some kind of fit. The first act of the crowd was to carry her into the house of a friend on the opposite side of the street, by which time medical assistance had crowded to the spot. Their attentions to Miss Liebenheim had naturally deranged the condition of things in the little room, but not before many people found time to remark that one of the murderers must have carried her with his bloody hands to the sofa on which she lay, for water had been sprinkled profusely over her face and throat, and water was even placed ready to her hand, when she might happen to recover, upon a low footstool by the side of the sofa.

On the following morning, Maximilian, who had been upon a hunting party in the forest, returned to the city, and immediately learned the news. I did not see him for some hours after, but he then appeared to me thoroughly agitated, for the first time I had known him to be so. In the evening another perplexing piece of intelligence transpired

with regard to Miss Liebenheim, which at first afflicted every friend of that young lady. It was that she had been seized with the pains of childbirth, and delivered of a son, who, however, being born prematurely, did not live many hours. Scandal, however, was not allowed long to batten upon this imaginary triumph, for within two hours after the circulation of this first rumor, followed a second, authenticated, announcing that Maximilian had appeared with the confessor of the Liebenheim family, at the residence of the chief magistrate, and there produced satisfactory proofs of his marriage with Miss Liebenheim, which had been duly celebrated, though with great secrecy, nearly eight months before. In our city, as in all the cities of our country, clandestine marriages, witnessed, perhaps, by two friends only of the parties, besides the officiating priest, are exceedingly common. In the mere fact, therefore, taken separately, there was nothing to surprise us, but, taken in connection with the general position of the parties, it *did* surprise us all; nor could we conjecture the reason for a step apparently so needless. For, that Maximilian could have thought it any point of prudence or necessity to secure the hand of Margaret Liebenheim by a private marriage, against the final opposition of her grandfather, nobody who knew the parties, who knew the perfect love which possessed Miss Liebenheim, the growing imbecility of her grandfather, or the utter contempt with which Maximilian regarded him, could for a moment believe. Altogether, the matter was one of profound mystery.

Meantime, it rejoiced me that poor Margaret's name had been thus rescued from the fangs of the scandal-mongers. These harpies had their prey torn from them at the very moment when they were sitting down to the unhallowed banquet. For this I rejoiced, but else there was little subject for rejoicing in anything which concerned poor Margaret. Long she lay in deep insensibility, taking no notice of anything, rarely opening her eyes, and apparently unconscious of the revolutions, as they succeeded, of morning or evening, light or darkness, yesterday or to-day. Great was the agitation which convulsed the heart of Maximilian during this period; he walked up and down in the cathedral nearly all day long, and the ravages which anxiety was working in his physical system might be read in his face. People felt it an intrusion upon the sanctity of his grief to look at him too narrowly, and the whole town sympathized with his situation.

At length a change took place in Margaret, but one which the medical men announced to Maximilian as boding ill for her recovery. The wanderings of her mind did not depart, but they altered their character. She became more agitated; she would start up suddenly, and strain her eyesight after some figure which she seemed to see; then she would apostrophize some person in the most piteous terms, beseeching him, with streaming eyes, to spare her old grandfather. "Look, look," she would cry out, "look at his gray hairs! O, sir! he is but a child; he does not know what he says; and he will soon be out of the way and in his grave;

and very soon, sir, he will give you no more trouble." Then, again, she would mutter indistinctly for hours together; sometimes she would cry out frantically, and say things which terrified the bystanders, and which the physicians would solemnly caution them how they repeated; then she would weep, and invoke Maximilian to come and aid her. But seldom, indeed, did that name pass her lips that she did not again begin to strain her eyeballs, and start up in bed to watch some phantom of her poor, fevered heart, as if it seemed vanishing into some mighty distance.

After nearly seven weeks passed in this agitating state, suddenly, on one morning, the earliest and the loveliest of dawning spring, a change was announced to us all as having taken place in Margaret; but it was a change, alas! that ushered in the last great change of all. The conflict, which had for so long a period raged within her, and overthrown her reason, was at an end; the strife was over, and nature was settling into an everlasting rest. In the course of the night she had recovered her senses. When the morning light penetrated through her curtain, she recognized her attendants, made inquiries as to the month and the day of the month, and then, sensible that she could not outlive the day, she requested that her confessor might be summoned.

About an hour and a half the confessor remained alone with her. At the end of that time he came out, and hastily summoned the attendants, for Margaret, he said, was sinking into a fainting fit. The confessor himself might have passed through many



a fit, so much was he changed by the results of this interview. I crossed him coming out of the house. I spoke to him—I called to him; but he heard me not—he saw me not. He saw nobody. Onwards he strode to the cathedral, where Maximilian was sure to be found, pacing about upon the graves. Him he seized by the arm; whispered something into his ear, and then both retired into one of the many sequestered chapels in which lights are continually burning. There they had some conversation, but not very long, for within five minutes Maximilian strode away to the house in which his young wife was dying. One step seemed to carry him up stairs. The attendants, according to the directions they had received from the physicians, mustered at the head of the stairs to oppose him. But that was idle: before the rights which he held as a lover and a husband—before the still more sacred rights of grief, which he carried in his countenance, all opposition fled like a dream. There was, besides, a fury in his eye. A motion of his hand waved them off like summer flies; he entered the room, and once again, for the last time, he was in company with his beloved.

What passed who could pretend to guess? Something more than two hours had elapsed, during which Margaret had been able to talk occasionally, which was known, because at times the attendants heard the sound of Maximilian's voice evidently in tones of reply to something which she had said. At the end of that time, a little bell, placed near the bedside, was rung hastily. A fainting fit had seized Margaret; but she recovered almost before her women

applied the usual remedies. They lingered, however, a little, looking at the youthful couple with an interest which no restraints availed to check. Their hands were locked together, and in Margaret's eyes there gleamed a farewell light of love, which settled upon Maximilian, and seemed to indicate that she was becoming speechless. Just at this moment she made a feeble effort to draw Maximilian towards her; he bent forward and kissed her with an anguish that made the most callous weep, and then he whispered something into her ear, upon which the attendants retired, taking this as a proof that their presence was a hindrance to a free communication. But they heard no more talking, and in less than ten minutes they returned. Maximilian and Margaret still retained their former position. Their hands were fast locked together; the same parting ray of affection, the same farewell light of love, was in the eye of Margaret, and still it settled upon Maximilian. But her eyes were beginning to grow dim; mists were rapidly stealing over them. Maximilian, who sat stupefied and like one not in his right mind, now, at the gentle request of the women, resigned his seat, for the hand which had clasped his had already relaxed its hold; the farewell gleam of love had departed. One of the women closed her eyelids; and there fell asleep forever the loveliest flower that our city had reared for generations.

The funeral took place on the fourth day after her death. In the morning of that day, from strong affection — having known her from an infant — I begged permission to see the corpse. She was in her coffin; snow-drops and crocuses were laid upon her

innocent bosom, and roses, of that sort which the season allowed, over her person. These and other lovely symbols of youth, of spring-time, and of resurrection, caught my eye for the first moment ; but in the next it fell upon her face. Mighty God ! what a change ! what a transfiguration ! Still, indeed, there was the same innocent sweetness ; still there was something of the same loveliness ; the expression still remained ; but for the features—all trace of flesh seemed to have vanished ; mere outline of bony structure remained ; mere pencillings and shadowings of what she once had been. This is, indeed, I exclaimed, “dust to dust—ashes to ashes !”

Maximilian, to the astonishment of everybody, attended the funeral. It was celebrated in the cathedral. All made way for him, and at times he seemed collected ; at times he reeled like one who was drunk. He heard as one who hears not ; he saw as one in a dream. The whole ceremony went on by torchlight, and towards the close he stood like a pillar, motionless, torpid, frozen. But the great burst of the choir, and the mighty blare ascending from our vast organ at the closing of the grave, recalled him to himself, and he strode rapidly homewards. Half an hour after I returned, I was summoned to his bed-room. He was in bed, calm and collected. What he said to me I remember as if it had been yesterday, and the very tone with which he said it, although more than twenty years have passed since then. He began thus : “I have not long to live ;” and when he saw me start, suddenly awakened into a consciousness that perhaps

he had taken poison, and meant to intimate as much. he continued: "You fancy I have taken poison;—no matter whether I have or not; if I have, the poison is such that no antidote will now avail; or, if they would, you well know that some griefs are of a kind which leave no opening to any hope. What difference, therefore, can it make whether I leave this earth to-day, to-morrow, or the next day? Be assured of this—that whatever I have determined to do is past all power of being affected by a human opposition. Occupy yourself not with any fruitless attempts, but calmly listen to me, else I know what to do." Seeing a suppressed fury in his eye, notwithstanding I saw also some change stealing over his features as if from some subtle poison beginning to work upon his frame, awe-struck I consented to listen, and sat still. "It is well that you do so, for my time is short. Here is my will, legally drawn up, and you will see that I have committed an immense property to your discretion. Here, again, is a paper still more important in my eyes; it is also testamentary, and binds you to duties which may not be so easy to execute as the disposal of my property. But now listen to something else, which concerns neither of these papers. Promise me, in the first place, solemnly, that whenever I die you will see me buried in the same grave as my wife, from whose funeral we are just returned. Promise."—I promised.—"Swear."—I swore.—"Finally, promise me that, when you read this second paper which I have put into your hands, whatsoever you may think of it, you will say nothing—publish nothing

to the world until three years shall have passed.”— I promised. — “ And now farewell for three hours. Come to me again about ten o’clock, and take a glass of wine in memory of old times.” This he said laughingly ; but even then a dark spasm crossed his face. Yet, thinking that this might be the mere working of mental anguish within him, I complied with his desire, and retired. Feeling, however, but little at ease, I devised an excuse for looking in upon him about one hour and a half after I had left him. I knocked gently at his door ; there was no answer. I knocked louder ; still no answer. I went in. The light of day was gone, and I could see nothing. But I was alarmed by the utter stillness of the room. I listened earnestly, but not a breath could be heard. I rushed back hastily into the hall for a lamp ; I returned ; I looked in upon this marvel of manly beauty, and the first glance informed me that he and all his splendid endowments had departed forever. He had died, probably, soon after I left him, and had dismissed me from some growing instinct which informed him that his last agonies were at hand.

I took up his two testamentary documents ; both were addressed in the shape of letters to myself. The first was a rapid though distinct appropriation of his enormous property. General rules were laid down, upon which the property was to be distributed, but the details were left to my discretion, and to the guidance of circumstances as they should happen to emerge from the various inquiries which it would become necessary to set on foot. This first document I soon laid aside, both because I found that its

provisions were dependent for their meaning upon the second, and because to this second document I looked with confidence for a solution of many mysteries ;—of the profound sadness which had, from the first of my acquaintance with him, possessed a man so gorgeously endowed as the favorite of nature and fortune ; of his motives for huddling up, in a clandestine manner, that connection which formed the glory of his life ; and possibly (but then I hesitated) of the late unintelligible murders, which still lay under as profound a cloud as ever. Much of this *would* be unveiled—all might be : and there and then, with the corpse lying beside me of the gifted and mysterious writer, I seated myself, and read the following statement :

“ MARCH 26, 1817.

“ My trial is finished ; my conscience, my duty, my honor, are liberated ; my ‘ warfare is accomplished.’ Margaret, my innocent young wife, I have seen for the last time. Her, the crown that might have been of my earthly felicity—her, the one temptation to put aside the bitter cup which awaited me—her, sole seductress (O, innocent seductress !) from the stern duties which my fate had imposed upon me—her, even her, I have sacrificed.

“ Before I go, partly lest the innocent should be brought into question for acts almost exclusively mine, but still more lest the lesson and the warning which God, by my hand, has written in blood upon your guilty walls, should perish for want of its authentic exposition, hear my last dying avowal,

that the murders which have desolated so many families within your walls, and made the household hearth no sanctuary, age no charter of protection, are all due originally to my head, if not always to my hand, as the minister of a dreadful retribution.

“That account of my history, and my prospects, which you received from the Russian diplomatist, among some errors of little importance, is essentially correct. My father was not so immediately connected with English blood as is there represented. However, it is true that he claimed descent from an English family of even higher distinction than that which is assigned in the Russian statement. He was proud of this English descent, and the more so as the war with revolutionary France brought out more prominently than ever the moral and civil grandeur of England. This pride was generous, but it was imprudent in his situation. His immediate progenitors had been settled in Italy — at Rome first, but latterly at Milan ; and his whole property, large and scattered, came, by the progress of the revolution, to stand under French domination. Many spoiliations he suffered ; but still he was too rich to be seriously injured. But he foresaw, in the progress of events, still greater perils menacing his most capital resources. Many of the states or princes in Italy were deeply in his debt ; and, in the great convulsions which threatened his country, he saw that both the contending parties would find a colorable excuse for absolving themselves from engagements which pressed unpleasantly upon their finances. In this embarrassment he formed an intimacy with a French

officer of high rank and high principle. My father's friend saw his danger, and advised him to enter the French service. In his younger days, my father had served extensively under many princes, and had found in every other military service a spirit of honor governing the conduct of the officers. Here only, and for the first time, he found ruffian manners and universal rapacity. He could not draw his sword in company with such men, nor in such a cause. But at length, under the pressure of necessity, he accepted (or rather bought with an immense bribe) the place of a commissary to the French forces in Italy. With this one resource, eventually he succeeded in making good the whole of his public claims upon the Italian states. These vast sums he remitted, through various channels, to England, where he became proprietor in the funds to an immense amount. Incautiously, however, something of this transpired, and the result was doubly unfortunate; for, while his intentions were thus made known as finally pointing to England, which of itself made him an object of hatred and suspicion, it also diminished his means of bribery. These considerations, along with another, made some French officers of high rank and influence the bitter enemies of my father. My mother, whom he had married when holding a brigadier-general's commission in the Austrian service, was, by birth and by religion, a Jewess. She was of exquisite beauty, and had been sought in Morganatic marriage by an archduke of the Austrian family; but she had relied upon this plea, that hers was the purest and noblest



blood amongst all Jewish families — that her family traced themselves, by tradition and a vast series of attestations under the hands of the Jewish high-priests, to the Maccabees, and to the royal houses of Judea; and that for her it would be a degradation to accept even of a sovereign prince on the terms of such marriage. This was no vain pretension of ostentatious vanity. It was one which had been admitted as valid for time immemorial in Transylvania and adjacent countries, where my mother's family were rich and honored, and took their seat amongst the dignitaries of the land. The French officers I have alluded to, without capacity for anything so dignified as a deep passion, but merely in pursuit of a vagrant fancy that would, on the next day, have given place to another equally fleeting, had dared to insult my mother with proposals the most licentious — proposals as much below her rank and birth, as, at any rate, they would have been below her dignity of mind and her purity. These she had communicated to my father, who bitterly resented the chains of subordination which tied up his hands from avenging his injuries. Still his eye told a tale which his superiors could brook as little as they could the disdainful neglect of his wife. More than one had been concerned in the injuries to my father and mother; more than one were interested in obtaining revenge. Things could be done in German towns, and by favor of old German laws or usages, which even in France could not have been tolerated. This my father's enemies well knew, but this my father also knew; and he endeavored to lay down his office of

commissary. That, however, was a favor which he could not obtain. He was compelled to serve on the German campaign then commencing, and on the subsequent one of Friedland and Eylau. Here he was caught in some one of the snares laid for him ; first trepanned into an act which violated some rule of the service ; and then provoked into a breach of discipline against the general officer who had thus trepanned him. Now was the long-sought opportunity gained, and in that very quarter of Germany best fitted for improving it. My father was thrown into prison in your city, subjected to the atrocious oppression of your jailer, and the more detestable oppression of your local laws. The charges against him were thought even to affect his life, and he was humbled into suing for permission to send for his wife and children. Already, to his proud spirit, it was punishment enough that he should be reduced to sue for favor to one of his bitterest foes. But it was no part of their plan to refuse *that*. By way of expediting my mother's arrival, a military courier, with every facility for the journey, was forwarded to her without delay. My mother, her two daughters, and myself, were then residing in Venice. I had, through the aid of my father's connections in Austria, been appointed in the imperial service, and held a high commission for my age. But, on my father's marching northwards with the French army, I had been recalled as an indispensable support to my mother. Not that my years could have made me such, for I had barely accomplished my twelfth year ; but my premature growth, and my military station,

had given me considerable knowledge of the world and presence of mind.

“ Our journey I pass over ; but as I approach your city, that sepulchre of honor and happiness to my poor family, my heart beats with frantic emotions. Never do I see that venerable dome of your minster from the forest, but I curse its form, which reminds me of what we then surveyed for many a mile as we traversed the forest. For leagues before we approached the city, this object lay before us in relief upon the frosty blue sky ; and still it seemed never to increase. Such was the complaint of my little sister Mariamne. Most innocent child ! would that it never had increased for thy eyes, but remained forever at a distance ! That same hour began the series of monstrous indignities which terminated the career of my ill-fated family. As we drew up to the city gates, the officer who inspected the passports, finding my mother and sisters described as Jewesses, which in my mother’s ears (reared in a region where Jews are not dishonored) always sounded a title of distinction, summoned a subordinate agent, who in coarse terms demanded his toll. We presumed this to be a road-tax for the carriage and horses, but we were quickly undeceived ; a small sum was demanded for each of my sisters and my mother, as for so many head of cattle. I, fancying some mistake, spoke to the man temperately, and, to do him justice, he did not seem desirous of insulting us ; but he produced a printed board, on which, along with the vilest animals, Jews and Jewesses were rated at so much a head. Whilst we were debating the point, the officers of the gate

wore a sneering smile upon their faces — the postillions were laughing together ; and this, too, in the presence of three creatures whose exquisite beauty, in different styles, agreeably to their different ages, would have caused noblemen to have fallen down and worshipped. My mother, who had never yet met with any flagrant insult on account of her national distinctions, was too much shocked to be capable of speaking. I whispered to her a few words, recalling her to her native dignity of mind, paid the money, and we drove to the prison. But the hour was past at which we could be admitted, and, as Jewesses, my mother and sisters could not be allowed to stay in the city ; they were to go into the Jewish quarter, a part of the suburb set apart for Jews, in which it was scarcely possible to obtain a lodging tolerably clean. My father, on the next day, we found, to our horror, at the point of death. To my mother he did not tell the worst of what he had endured. To me he told that, driven to madness by the insults offered to him, he had upbraided the court-martial with their corrupt propensities, and had even mentioned that overtures had been made to him for quashing the proceedings in return for a sum of two millions of francs ; and that his sole reason for not entertaining the proposal was his distrust of those who made it. ‘ They would have taken my money,’ said he, ‘ and then found a pretext for putting me to death, that I might tell no secrets.’ This was too near the truth to be tolerated ; in concert with the local authorities, the military enemies of my father conspired against him — witnesses were

suborned ; and, finally, under some antiquated law of the place, he was subjected, in secret, to a mode of torture which still lingers in the east of Europe.

“He sank under the torture and the degradation. I, too, thoughtlessly, but by a natural movement of filial indignation, suffered the truth to escape me in conversing with my mother. And she —— ; but I will preserve the regular succession of things. My father died ; but he had taken such measures, in concert with me, that his enemies should never benefit by his property. Meantime my mother and sisters had closed my father’s eyes ; had attended his remains to the grave ; and in every act connected with this last sad rite had met with insults and degradations too mighty for human patience. My mother, now become incapable of self-command, in the fury of her righteous grief, publicly and in court denounced the conduct of the magistracy — taxed some of them with the vilest proposals to herself — taxed them as a body with having used instruments of torture upon my father ; and, finally, accused them of collusion with the French military oppressors of the district. This last was a charge under which they quailed ; for by that time the French had made themselves odious to all who retained a spark of patriotic feeling. My heart sank within me when I looked up at the bench, this tribunal of tyrants, all purple or livid with rage ; when I looked at them alternately and at my noble mother with her weeping daughters — these so powerless, those so basely vindictive, and locally so omnipotent. Willingly I would have sacrificed all my wealth for a simple per-

mission to quit this infernal city with my poor female relations safe and undishonored. But far other were the intentions of that incensed magistracy. My mother was arrested, charged with some offence equal to petty treason, or *scandalum magnatum*, or the sowing of sedition ; and, though what she said was true, where, alas ! was she to look for evidence ? Here was seen the want of gentlemen. Gentlemen, had they been even equally tyrannical, would have recoiled with shame from taking vengeance on a woman. And what a vengeance ! O, heavenly powers ! that I should live to mention such a thing ! Man that is born of woman, to inflict upon woman personal scourging on the bare back, and through the streets at noonday ! Even for Christian women the punishment was severe which the laws assigned to the offence in question. But for Jewesses, by one of the ancient laws against that persecuted people, far heavier and more degrading punishments were annexed to almost every offence. What else could be looked for in a city which welcomed its Jewish guests by valuing them at its gates as brute beasts ? Sentence was passed, and the punishment was to be inflicted on two separate days, with an interval between each — doubtless to prolong the tortures of mind, but under a vile pretence of alleviating the physical torture. Three days after would come the first day of punishment. My mother spent the time in reading her native Scriptures ; she spent it in prayer and in musing ; whilst her daughters clung and wept around her day and night — grovelling on the ground at the feet of any people in author-

ity that entered their mother's cell. That same interval — how was it passed by me? Now mark, my friend. Every man in office, or that could be presumed to bear the slightest influence, every wife, mother, sister, daughter of such men, I besieged morning, noon, and night. I wearied them with my supplications. I humbled myself to the dust; I, the haughtiest of God's creatures, knelt and prayed to them for the sake of my mother. I besought them that I might undergo the punishment ten times over in her stead. And once or twice I *did* obtain the encouragement of a few natural tears — given more, however, as I was told, to my piety than to my mother's deserts. But rarely was I heard out with patience; and from some houses repelled with personal indignities. The day came: I saw my mother half undressed by the base officials; I heard the prison gates expand; I heard the trumpets of the magistracy sound. She had warned me what to do; I had warned myself. Would I sacrifice a retribution sacred and comprehensive, for the momentary triumph over an individual? If not, let me forbear to look out of doors; for I felt that in the self-same moment in which I saw the dog of an executioner raise his accursed hand against my mother, swifter than the lightning would my dagger search his heart. When I heard the roar of the cruel mob, I paused — endured — forbore. I stole out by by-lanes of the city from my poor exhausted sisters, whom I left sleeping in each other's innocent arms, into the forest. There I listened to the shouting populace; there even I fancied that I could trace my poor

mother's route by the course of the triumphant cries. There, even then, even then, I made — O, silent forest! thou heardest me when I made — a vow that I have kept too faithfully. Mother, thou art avenged: sleep, daughter of Jerusalem! for at length the oppressor sleeps with thee. And thy poor son has paid, in discharge of his vow, the forfeit of his own happiness, of a paradise opening upon earth, of a heart as innocent as thine, and a face as fair.

“I returned, and found my mother returned. She slept by starts, but she was feverish and agitated; and when she awoke and first saw me, she blushed, as if I could think that real degradation had settled upon her. Then it was that I told her of my vow. Her eyes were lambent with fierce light for a moment; but, when I went on more eagerly to speak of my hopes and projects, she called me to her — kissed me, and whispered: ‘O, not so, my son! think not of me — think not of vengeance — think only of poor Berenice and Mariamne.’ Ay, that thought *was* startling. Yet this magnanimous and forbearing mother, as I knew by the report of our one faithful female servant, had, in the morning, during her bitter trial, behaved as might have become a daughter of Judas Maccabæus: she had looked serenely upon the vile mob, and awed even them by her serenity; she had disdained to utter a shriek when the cruel lash fell upon her fair skin. There is a point that makes the triumph over natural feelings of pain easy or not easy — the degree in which we count upon the sympathy of the bystanders. My mother had it not in the beginning; but, long before the end, her celestial



beauty, the divinity of injured innocence, the pleading of common womanhood in the minds of the lowest class, and the reaction of manly feeling in the men, had worked a great change in the mob. Some began now to threaten those who had been active in insulting her. The silence of awe and respect succeeded to noise and uproar; and feelings which they scarcely understood, mastered the rude rabble as they witnessed more and more the patient fortitude of the sufferer. Menaces began to rise towards the executioner. Things wore such an aspect that the magistrates put a sudden end to the scene.

“That day we received permission to go home to our poor house in the Jewish quarter. I know not whether you are learned enough in Jewish usages to be aware that in every Jewish house, where old traditions are kept up, there is one room consecrated to confusion; a room always locked up and sequestered from vulgar use, except on occasions of memorable affliction, where everything is purposely in disorder — broken — shattered — mutilated: to typify, by symbols appalling to the eye, that desolation which has so long trampled on Jerusalem, and the ravages of the boar within the vineyards of Judea. My mother, as a Hebrew princess, maintained all traditional customs. Even in this wretched suburb she had her ‘chamber of desolation.’ There it was that I and my sisters heard her last words. The rest of her sentence was to be carried into effect within a week. She, mean time, had disdained to utter any word of fear; but that

energy of self-control had made the suffering but the more bitter. Fever and dreadful agitation had succeeded. Her dreams showed sufficiently to us, who watched her couch, that terror for the future mingled with the sense of degradation for the past. Nature asserted her rights. But the more she shrank from the suffering, the more did she proclaim how severe it had been, and consequently how noble the self-conquest. Yet, as her weakness increased, so did her terror; until I besought her to take comfort, assuring her that, in case any attempt should be made to force her out again to public exposure, I would kill the man who came to execute the order — that we would all die together — and there would be a common end to her injuries and her fears. She was reassured by what I told her of my belief that no future attempt would be made upon her. She slept more tranquilly — but her fever increased; and slowly she slept away into the everlasting sleep which knows of no to-morrow.

“Here came a crisis in my fate. Should I stay and attempt to protect my sisters? But, alas! what power had I to do so amongst our enemies? Rachael and I consulted; and many a scheme we planned. Even whilst we consulted, and the very night after my mother had been committed to the Jewish burying-ground, came an officer, bearing an order for me to repair to Vienna. Some officer in the French army, having watched the transaction respecting my parents, was filled with shame and grief. He wrote a statement of the whole to an Austrian officer of rank, my father’s friend, who

obtained from the emperor an order, claiming me as a page of his own, and an officer in the household service. O, heavens! what a neglect that it did not include my sisters! However, the next best thing was that I should use my influence at the imperial court to get them passed to Vienna. This I did, to the utmost of my power. But seven months elapsed before I saw the emperor. If my applications ever met his eye he might readily suppose that your city, my friend, was as safe a place as another for my sisters. Nor did I myself know all its dangers. At length, with the emperor's leave of absence, I returned. And what did I find? Eight months had passed, and the faithful Rachael had died. The poor sisters, clinging together, but now utterly bereft of friends, knew not which way to turn. In this abandonment they fell into the insidious hands of the ruffian jailer. My eldest sister, Berenice, the stateliest and noblest of beauties, had attracted this ruffian's admiration while she was in the prison with her mother. And when I returned to your city, armed with the imperial passports for all, I found that Berenice had died in the villain's custody; nor could I obtain anything beyond a legal certificate of her death. And, finally, the blooming, laughing Mariamne, she also had died—and of affliction for the loss of her sister. You, my friend, had been absent upon your travels during the calamitous history I have recited. You had seen neither my father nor my mother. But you came in time to take under your protection, from the abhorred wretch the jailer, my little broken-hearted

Mariamne. And when sometimes you fancied that you had seen me under other circumstances, in her it was, my dear friend, and in her features that you saw mine.

“Now was the world a desert to me. I cared little, in the way of love, which way I turned. But in the way of hatred I cared everything. I transferred myself to the Russian service, with the view of gaining some appointment on the Polish frontier, which might put it in my power to execute my vow of destroying all the magistrates of your city. War, however, raged, and carried me into far other regions. It ceased, and there was little prospect that another generation would see it relighted; for the disturber of peace was a prisoner forever, and all nations were exhausted. Now, then, it became necessary that I should adopt some new mode for executing my vengeance; and the more so, because annually some were dying of those whom it was my mission to punish. A voice ascended to me, day and night, from the graves of my father and mother, calling for vengeance before it should be too late. I took my measures thus: Many Jews were present at Waterloo. From amongst these, all irritated against Napoleon for the expectations he had raised, only to disappoint, by his great assembly of Jews at Paris, I selected eight, whom I knew familiarly as men hardened by military experience against the movements of pity. With these as my beagles, I hunted for some time in your forest before opening my regular campaign; and I am surprised that you did not hear of the death which met the executioner — him I mean who dared to lift his hand against my

mother This man I met by accident in the forest ; and I slew him. I talked with the wretch, as a stranger at first, upon the memorable case of the Jewish lady. Had he relented, had he expressed compunction, *I* might have relented. But far otherwise : the dog, not dreaming to whom he spoke, exulted ; he —— But why repeat the villain's words ? I cut him to pieces. Next I did this : My agents I caused to matriculate separately at the college. They assumed the college dress. And now mark the solution of that mystery which caused such perplexity. Simply as students we all had an unsuspected admission at any house. Just then there was a common practice, as you will remember, amongst the younger students, of going out a masking—that is, of entering houses in the academic dress, and with the face masked. This practice subsisted even during the most intense alarm from the murderers ; for the dress of the students was supposed to bring protection along with it. But, even after suspicion had connected itself with this dress, it was sufficient that I should appear unmasked at the head of the maskers, to insure them a friendly reception. Hence the facility with which death was inflicted, and that unaccountable absence of any motion towards an alarm. I took hold of my victim, and he looked at me with smiling security. Our weapons were hid under our academic robes ; and even when we drew them out, and at the moment of applying them to the throat, they still supposed our gestures to be part of the pantomime we were performing. Did I relish this

abuse of personal confidence in myself? No — I loathed it, and I grieved for its necessity; but my mother, a phantom not seen with bodily eyes, but ever present to my mind, continually ascended before me; and still I shouted aloud to my astounded victim, ‘This comes from the Jewess! Hound of hounds! Do you remember the Jewess whom you dishonored, and the oaths which you broke in order that you might dishonor her, and the righteous law which you violated, and the cry of anguish from her son which you scoffed at?’ Who I was, what I avenged, and whom, I made every man aware, and every woman, before I punished them. The details of the cases I need not repeat. One or two I was obliged, at the beginning, to commit to my Jews. The suspicion was thus, from the first, turned aside by the notoriety of my presence elsewhere; but I took care that none suffered who had not either been upon the guilty list of magistrates who condemned the mother, or of those who turned away with mockery from the supplication of the son.

“It pleased God, however, to place a mighty temptation in my path, which might have persuaded me to forego all thoughts of vengeance, to forget my vow, to forget the voices which invoked me from the grave. This was Margaret Liebenheim. Ah! how terrific appeared my duty of bloody retribution, after her angel’s face and angel’s voice had calmed me. With respect to her grandfather, strange it is to mention, that never did my innocent wife appear so lovely as precisely in the rela-

tion of grand-daughter. So beautiful was her goodness to the old man, and so divine was the childlike innocence on her part, contrasted with the guilty recollections associated with him—for he was amongst the guiltiest towards my mother—still I delayed *his* punishment to the last; and, for his child's sake, I would have pardoned him—nay, I had resolved to do so, when a fierce Jew, who had a deep malignity towards this man, swore that he would accomplish *his* vengeance at all events, and perhaps might be obliged to include Margaret in the ruin, unless I adhered to the original scheme. Then I yielded; for circumstances armed this man with momentary power. But the night fixed on was one in which I had reason to know that my wife would be absent; for so I had myself arranged with her, and the unhappy counter-arrangement I do not yet understand. Let me add, that the sole purpose of my clandestine marriage was to sting her grandfather's mind with the belief that *his* family had been dishonored, even as he had dishonored mine. He learned, as I took care that he should, that his grand-daughter carried about with her the promises of a mother, and did not know that she had the sanction of a wife. This discovery made him, in one day, become eager for the marriage he had previously opposed; and this discovery also embittered the misery of his death. At that moment I attempted to think only of my mother's wrongs; but, in spite of all I could do, this old man appeared to me in the light of Margaret's grandfather—and, had I been left to myself, he would have been saved.

As it was, never was horror equal to mine when I met her flying to his succor. I had relied upon her absence ; and the misery of that moment, when her eye fell upon me in the very act of seizing her grandfather, far transcended all else that I have suffered in these terrific scenes. She fainted in my arms, and I and another carried her up stairs and procured water. Meantime her grandfather had been murdered, even whilst Margaret fainted. I had, however, under the fear of discovery, though never anticipating a rencontre with herself, forestalled the explanation requisite in such a case to make my conduct intelligible. I had told her, under feigned names, the story of my mother and my sisters. She knew their wrongs : she had heard me contend for the right of vengeance. Consequently, in our parting interview, one word only was required to place myself in a new position to her thoughts. I needed only to say I was that son ; that unhappy mother, so miserably degraded and outraged, was mine.

“As to the jailer, he was met by a party of us. Not suspecting that any of us could be connected with the family, he was led to talk of the most hideous details with regard to my poor Berenice. The child had not, as had been insinuated, aided her own degradation, but had nobly sustained the dignity of her sex and her family. Such advantages as the monster pretended to have gained over her — sick, desolate, and latterly delirious — were, by his own confession, not obtained without violence. This was too much. Forty thousand lives, had he possessed them, could not have gratified my thirst for



revenge. Yet, had he but showed courage, he should have died the death of a soldier. But the wretch showed cowardice the most abject, and —, but you know his fate.

“Now, then, all is finished, and human nature is avenged. Yet, if you complain of the bloodshed and the terror, think of the wrongs which created my rights; think of the sacrifice by which I gave a tenfold strength to those rights; think of the necessity for a dreadful concussion and shock to society, in order to carry my lesson into the councils of princes.

“This will now have been effected. And ye, victims of dishonor, will be glorified in your deaths; ye will not have suffered in vain, nor died without a monument. Sleep, therefore, sister Berenice — sleep, gentle Mariamne, in peace. And thou, noble mother, let the outrages sown in thy dishonor, rise again and blossom in wide harvests of honor for the women of thy afflicted race. Sleep, daughters of Jerusalem, in the sanctity of your sufferings. And thou, if it be possible, even more beloved daughter of a Christian fold, whose company was too soon denied to him in life, open thy grave to receive *him*, who, in the hour of death, wishes to remember no title which he wore on earth but that of thy chosen and adoring lover,

“MAXIMILIAN.”

ADDITIONS  
TO THE "CONFESSIONS OF AN OPIUM-EATER."

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DE QUINCEY.

THIS family, which split (or, as a grammatical purist lately said to me, in a tone of expostulation, *splat*) into three national divisions, — English, French, and American, — originally was Norwegian ; and in the year of our Christian era *one thousand* spoke (I believe) the most undeniable Norse. Throughout the eleventh century, the heads of this family (in common with all the ruffians and martial vagabonds of Europe, that had Venetian sequins enough disposable for such a trip) held themselves in readiness to join any *likely* leader ; and did join William the Norman. Very few, indeed, or probably none, of his brigands were Frenchmen, or native Neustrians ; Normans being notoriously a name not derived *from* any French province, but imported *into* that province by trans-Baltic, and in a smaller proportion by cis-Baltic aliens. This Norwegian family, having assumed a territorial denomination from the district or village of Quincy, in the province now called Normandy, transplanted themselves to England ; where,

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and subsequently by marriage in Scotland, they ascended to the highest rank in both kingdoms, and held the highest offices open to a subject. A late distinguished writer, Mr. Moir, of Musselburgh, the *Della* of "Blackwood's Magazine," took the trouble (which must have been considerable) of tracing their aspiring movements in Scotland, through a period when Normans transferred themselves from England to Scotland in considerable numbers, and with great advantages. This elaborate paper, published many years ago in "Blackwood's Magazine," first made known the leading facts of their career in Scotland. Meantime in England they continued to flourish through nine or ten generations; took a distinguished part in one, at least, of the Crusades; and a still more perilous share in the Barons' Wars, under Henry III. No family drank more deeply or more frequently from the cup of treason, which in those days was not always a very grave offence in people who having much territorial influence had also much money. But, happening to drink once too often, or taking too long a "pull" at the cup, the Earls of Winchester suddenly came to grief. Amongst the romances of astronomy, there is one, I believe, which has endeavored to account for the little asteroids of our system, by supposing them fragments of some great planet that had, under internal convulsion or external collision, at some period suddenly exploded. In our own planet Tellus, such a county as York, under a similar catastrophe, would make a very pretty little asteroid. And, with some miniature resemblance to such a case, some-

times benefiting by the indulgence of the crown, sometimes by legal devices, sometimes by aid of matrimonial alliances, numerous descendants, confessedly innocent, from the guilty earl, projected themselves by successive efforts, patiently watching their opportunities, from the smoking ruins of the great feudal house; stealthily through two generations creeping out of their lurking holes; timidly, when the great shadows from the threatening throne had passed over, reëssuming the family name. Concurrently with these *personal* fragments projected from the ancient house, flew off random splinters and fragments from the great planetary disk of the Winchester estates, little asteroids that formed ample inheritances for the wants of this or that provincial squire, of this or that tame villatic squireen.\*

The kingly old oak, that had been the leader of the forest, was thus suddenly (in the technical language of wood-craft) cut down into a "pollard." This mutilation forever prevented it from aspiring cloudwards by means of some mighty stem, such as grows upon Norwegian hills, fit to be the mast of "some great ammiral." Nevertheless, we see daily amongst the realities of nature, that a tree, after passing through such a process of degradation, yet manifests the great arrears of vindictive life lurking within it, by throwing out a huge radiation of slender boughs and

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\* This last variety of the rustic *regulus* is of Hibernian origin; and, as regards the name, was unknown to us in England until Miss Edgeworth had extended the horizon of our social experience. Yet, without the name, I presume that the *thing* must have been known occasionally even in England.

miniature shoots, small but many, so that we are forced exactly to invert the fine words of Lucan, saying no longer, *trunco, non frondibus efficit umbram*, but, on the contrary, *non trunco sed frondibus efficit umbram*. This great cabbage-head of this ancient human tree threw a broad massy umbrage over more villages than one; sometimes yielding representatives moody and mutinous, sometimes vivacious and inventive, sometimes dull and lethargic, until at last, one fine morning, on rubbing their eyes, they found themselves actually in the sixteenth century abreast of Henry VIII. and his fiery children. Ah, what a century was that! Sculptured as only Froude can sculpture those that fight across the chasms of eternity; grouped as only Froude can group the mighty factions, acting or suffering, arraigning before chanceries of man, or protesting before chanceries of God — what vast arrays of marble gladiators fighting for truth, real or imagined, throng the arenas in each generation of that and the succeeding century! And how ennobling a distinction of modern humanity, that in Pagan antiquity no truth as yet existed, none had been revealed, none emblazoned, on behalf of which man *could* have fought! As Lord Bacon remarks, — though strangely, indeed, publishing in the very terms of this remark his own blindness to the causes and consequences, — religious wars were unknown to antiquity. Personal interests, and those only, did or could furnish a subject of conflict. But throughout the sixteenth century, whether in England, in France, or in Germany, it was a spiritual interest, shadowy and aerial, which embattled armies

against armies. Simply the nobility of this interest it was, simply the grandeur of a cause moving by springs transcendent to all vulgar and mercenary collisions of prince with prince, or family with family, that arrayed man against man, not upon petty combinations of personal intrigue, but upon questions of everlasting concern — this majestic principle of the strife it was that constituted for the noblest minds its secret magnetism. Early in the seventeenth century, when it seemed likely that the interests of a particular family would be entangled with the principles at issue, multitudes became anxious to evade the strife by retiring to the asylum of forests. Amongst these was one branch of the De Quinceys. Enamored of democracy, this family, laying aside the aristocratic *De* attached to their name, settled in New England, where they subsequently rose, through long public services, to the highest moral rank — as measured by all possible expressions of public esteem that are consistent with the simplicities of the great republic. Mr. Josiah Quincy, as head of this distinguished family, is appealed to as one who takes rank by age and large political experience with the founders of the American Union. Another branch of the same family had, at a much earlier period, settled in France. Finally, the squires and squireens — that is, those who benefited in any degree by those “asteroids” which I have explained as exploded from the ruins of the Winchester estates — naturally remained in England. The last of them who enjoyed any relics whatever of that ancient territorial domain, was an elder kinsman of my father. I never had the honor

of seeing him ; in fact, it was impossible that I *should* have such an honor, since he died during the American war, which war had closed, although it had not paid its bills, some time before my birth. He enacted the part of squireen, I have been told, creditably enough in a village belonging either to the county of Leicester, Nottingham, or Rutland. Sir Andrew Aguecheek observes, as one of his sentimental remembrances, that he also at one period of his life had been "adored." "I was adored once," says the knight, seeming to acknowledge that he was not adored then. But the squireen was "adored" in a limited way to the last. This fading representative of a crusading house declined gradually into the oracle of the bar at the Red Lion ; and was adored by two persons at the least (not counting himself), namely, the landlord, and occasionally the waiter. Mortgages had eaten up the last vestiges of the old territorial wrecks ; and, with his death, a new era commenced for this historical family, which now (as if expressly to irritate its ambition) finds itself distributed amongst three mighty nations, — France, America, and England, — and precisely those three that are usually regarded as the leaders of civilization.\*

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\* The omission of the *De*, as an addition looking better at a tournament than as an endorsement on a bill of exchange, began, as to many hundreds of English names, full three hundred years ago. Many English families have disused this affix simply from indolence. As to the terminal variations, *cy*, *cie*, *cey*, those belong, as natural and inevitable exponents of a transitional condition, to the unsettled spelling that characterizes the early stages of literature in all countries alike.

## BARBARA LEWTHWAITE.\*

THIS girl was a person of some poetic distinction, being (unconsciously to herself) the chief speaker in a little pastoral poem of Wordsworth's. That she was really beautiful, and not merely so described by me for the sake of improving the picturesque effect, the reader will judge from this line in the poem, written, perhaps, ten years earlier, when Barbara might be six years old :

“ 'T was little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child of beauty rare ! ”

This, coming from William Wordsworth, both a fastidious judge and a truth-speaker of the severest literality, argues some real pretensions to beauty, or real at that time. But it is notorious that, in the anthologies of earth through all her zones, one flower beyond every other is liable to change, which flower is the countenance of woman. Whether in his fine stanzas upon “ Mutability,” where the most pathetic instances of this earthly doom are solemnly arrayed, Spenser has dwelt sufficiently upon this the saddest of all, I do not remember.

Already Barbara Lewthwaite had contributed to the composition of two impressive pictures — first, in her infancy, with her pet lamb, under the evening shadows of the mighty Fairfield ; secondly, in her girlhood, with the turbaned Malay, and the little cottage child. But, subsequently, when a young woman, she entered unconsciously into the composition of another picture even more rememberable,

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\* Referred to in the “ Confessions,” page 93, as a beautiful English girl.



suggesting great names, connected with the greatest of themes ; the names being those of Plato, and, in this instance, at least, of a mightier than Plato, namely, William Wordsworth ; and the theme concerned being that problem which, measured by its interest to man, by its dependencies, by the infinite jewel staked upon the verdict, we should all confess to be the most solemn and heart-shaking that is hung out by golden chains from the heaven of heavens to human investigation, namely — Is the spirit of man numbered amongst things naturally perishable ? The doctrine of our own Dodwell (a most orthodox man), was, that naturally and *per se* it was perishable, but that by supernatural endowment it was made immortal. Apparently the ancient oracles of the Hebrew literature had all and everywhere assumed the soul's natural mortality. The single passage in Job, that *seemed* to look in the counter direction, has long since received an interpretation painfully alien from such a meaning ; not to mention that the same objection would apply to this passage, if read into a Christian sense, as applies to the ridiculous interpolation in Josephus describing Christ's personal appearance, namely — Once suppose it genuine, and why were there not myriads of other passages in the same key ? Imagine, for a moment, the writer so penetrated with premature Christian views, by what inexplicable rigor of abstinence had he forborne to meet ten thousand calls, at other turns of his work, for similar utterances of Christian sentiment ? It must not be supposed that the objections to this Christian interpretation of Job

rest solely with German scholars. Coleridge, one of the most devout and evangelical amongst modern theologians, took the same view ; and has expressed it with decision. But Job is of slight importance in comparison with Moses. Now, Warburton, in his well-known argument, held, not only that Moses *did* (as a fact) assume the mortality of the soul, but that, as a necessity, he did so, since upon this assumption rests the weightiest argument for his own divine mission. That Moses could dispense with a support which Warburton fancied all other legislators had needed and postulated, argued, in the bishop's opinion, a vicarious support—a secret and divine support. This extreme view will be rejected, perhaps, by most people. But, in the mean time, the very existence of such a sect as the Sadducees proves sufficiently that no positive affirmation of the soul's immortality could have been accredited amongst the Hebrew nation as a Mosaic doctrine. The rise of a counter sect, the Pharisees, occurred in later days, clearly under a principle of “development” applied to old traditions current among the Jews. It was not alleged as a Mosaic doctrine, but as something deducible from traditions countenanced by Moses.

From Hebrew literature, therefore, no help is to be looked for on this great question. Pagan literature first of all furnishes any response upon it favorable to human yearnings. But, unhappily, the main argument upon which the sophist in the *Phædo* relies, is a pure scholastic conundrum, baseless and puerile. The homogeneity of human consciousness, upon which is made to rest its indestructibility, is not established

or made probable by any plausible logic. If we should figure to ourselves some mighty angel mounting guard upon human interests twenty-three centuries ago, this tutelary spirit would have smiled derisively upon the advent and the departure of Plato. At length, once again, after many centuries, was heard the clarion of immortality — not as of any preternatural gift, but as a natural prerogative of the human spirit. This time the angel would have paused and hearkened. The auguries for immortality, which Wordsworth drew from indications running along the line of daily human experience, were two. The first was involved in the exquisite little poem of “We are Seven.” That authentic voice, said Wordsworth, which affirmed life as a necessity inalienable from man’s consciousness, was a revelation through the lips of childhood. Life in its torrent fulness — that is, life in its earliest stage — affirmed itself; whereas the voice which whispered doubts was an adventitious and secondary voice consequent upon an earthly experience. The child in this little poem is unable to admit the thought of death, though, in compliance with custom, she uses the word.

“The first that *died* was little Jane;  
In bed she moaning lay;  
Till God released her from her pain,  
And then she went away.”

The graves of her brother and sister she is so far from regarding as any argument of their having died, that she supposes the stranger simply to doubt her statement, and she reiterates her assertion of their

graves as lying in the churchyard, in order to prove that they were *living* :

“ ‘ Their graves are green, they may be seen,’  
The little maid replied,  
‘ Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door,  
And they are side by side.  
And often after sunset, sir,  
When it is light and fair,  
I take my little porringer,  
And eat my supper there.  
My stockings there I often knit,  
My kerchief there I hem ;  
And there upon their graves I sit —  
I sit, and sing to them.’ ”

The other argument was developed in the sublime “Ode upon the Intimations of Immortality,” &c. Man in his infancy stood *nearest* (so much was matter of fact) to the unseen world of the Infinite. What voices he heard most frequently, murmuring through the cells of his infantine brain, were echoes of the great realities which, as a new-born infant, he had just quitted. Hanging upon his mother’s breast, he heard dim prolongations of a music which belonged to a life ever more and more receding into a distance buried in clouds and vapors. Man’s orient, in which lie the fountains of the dawn, must be sought for in that Eden of infancy which first received him as a traveller emerging from a world now daily becoming more distant. And it is a great argument of the divine splendor investing man’s natural home, that the heavenly lights which burned in his morning grow fainter and fainter as he “travels further from the East.”

The little Carnarvonshire child in "We are Seven," who is represented as repelling the idea of death under an absolute inability to receive it, had completed her eighth year. But this might be an ambitious exaggeration, such as aspiring female children are generally disposed to practise. It is more probable that she might be in the currency of her eighth year. Naturally we must not exact from Wordsworth any pedantic rigor of accuracy in such a case; but assuredly we have a right to presume that his principle, if tenable at all, must apply to all children below the age of *five*. However, I will say *four*. In that case the following anecdote seems to impeach the philosophic truth of this doctrine. I give the memorandum as it was drawn up by myself at the time:

My second child, but eldest daughter, little M——, is between two and three weeks less than two years old; and from the day of her birth she has been uniformly attended by Barbara Lewthwaite. We are now in the first days of June; but, about three weeks since, consequently in the earlier half of May, some one of our neighbors gave to M—— a little bird. I am no great ornithologist. "Perhaps only a tenth-rate one," says some too flattering reader. O dear, no, nothing near it; I fear, no more than a five hundred and tenth rater. Consequently, I cannot ornithologically describe or classify the bird. But I believe that it belonged to the family of finches — either a goldfinch, bullfinch, or at least something ending in *inch*. The present was less splendid than at first it seemed. For the bird was wounded; though

not in a way that made the wound apparent; and too sensibly as the evening wore away it drooped. None of us knew what medical treatment to suggest; and all that occurred was to place it with free access to bird-seed and water. At length sunset arrived, which was the signal for M——'s departure to bed. She came, therefore, as usual to me, threw her arms round my neck, and went through her ordinary routine of prayers; namely, first, the Lord's Prayer, and, finally, the four following lines (a Roman Catholic bequest to the children of Northern England):

“ Holy \* Jesus, meek and mild,  
Look on me, a little child;  
Pity my simplicity;  
Grant that I may come to thee.”

M——, as she was moving off to bed, whispered to me that I was to “mend” the bird with “yoddodnum.” Having always seen *me* taking laudanum, and for the purpose (as she was told) of growing better in health, reasonably it struck her that the little bird would improve under the same regimen. For her satisfaction, I placed a little diluted laudanum near to the bird; and she then departed to bed, though with uneasy looks reverting to her sick little pet. Occupied with some point of study, it happened that I sat up through the whole night; and

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\* “*Holy Jesus*:” — This was a very judicious correction introduced by Wordsworth. Originally the traditional line had stood, “Gentle Jesus, meek and mild.” But Wordsworth, offended by the idle iteration of one idea in the words, gentle, meek, mild, corrected the text into *Holy*.

long before seven o'clock in the morning she had summoned Barbara to dress her, and soon I heard the impatient little foot descending the stairs to my study. I had such a Jesuitical *bulletin* ready, by way of a report upon the bird's health, as might not seem absolutely despairing, though not too dangerously sanguine. And, as the morning was one of heavenly splendor, I proposed that we should improve the bird's chances by taking it out-of-doors into the little orchard at the foot of Fairfield — our loftiest Grasmere mountain. Thither moved at once Barbara Lewthwaite, little M——, myself, and the poor languishing bird. By that time in May, in any far southern county, perhaps the birds would be ceasing to sing; but not so with us dilatory people in Westmoreland. Suddenly, as we all stood around the little perch on which the bird rested, one thrilling song, louder than the rest, arose from a neighboring hedge. Immediately the bird's eye, previously dull, kindled into momentary fire; the bird rose on its perch, struggled for an instant, seemed to be expanding its wings, made one aspiring movement upwards, in doing so fell back, and in another moment was dead. Too certainly and apparently all these transitions symbolically interpreted themselves, and to all of us alike; the proof of which was — that man, woman, and child spontaneously shed tears; a weakness, perhaps, but more natural under the regular processional evolution of the scenical stages, than when simply read as a narrative; for too evident it was, to one and all of us, without needing to communicate by words, *what* vision had revealed itself

to all alike — to the child under two years old, not less than to the adults ; too evident it was, that, on this magnificent May morning, there had been exhibited, as on the stage of a theatre — there had passed before the eyes of us all — passed, and was finished — the everlasting mystery of death ! It seemed to me that little M——, by her sudden burst of tears, must have read this saddest of truths — must have felt that the bird's fate was sealed — not less clearly than Barbara or myself.

## THE DAUGHTER OF LEBANON.

### AN OPIUM DREAM.

PREFATORY NOTE. — By accident, a considerable part of the Confessions (all, in short, except the Dreams) had originally been written hastily ; and, from various causes, had never received any strict revision, or, *virtually*, so much as an ordinary verbal correction. But a great deal more was wanted than this. The main narrative should naturally have moved through a succession of secondary incidents ; and, with leisure for recalling these, it might have been greatly inspirited. Wanting all opportunity for such advantages, this narrative had been needlessly impoverished. And thus it had happened that not so properly correction and retrenchment were called for, as integration of what had been left imperfect, or amplification of what, from the first, had been insufficiently expanded. \* \* \* \* I had relied upon a crowning grace, which I had reserved for the final pages of this volume, in a succession of some twenty or twenty-five dreams and noon-day visions, which had arisen under the latter stages of opium influence. These have disappeared : some under circumstances which allow me a reasonable prospect of recovering them ; some unaccountably ; and some dishonorably. Five or six, I believe, were



burned in a sudden conflagration which arose from the spark of a candle falling unobserved amongst a very large pile of papers in a bedroom, when I was alone and reading. Falling not *on*, but *amongst* and *within* the papers, the fire would soon have been ahead of conflict ; and, by communicating with the slight wood-work and draperies of a bed, it would have immediately enveloped the laths of a ceiling overhead, and thus the house, far from fire-engines, would have been burned down in half-an-hour. My attention was first drawn by a sudden light upon my book ; and the whole difference between a total destruction of the premises and a trivial loss (from books charred) of five guineas, was due to a large Spanish cloak. This, thrown over, and then drawn down tightly, by the aid of one sole person, somewhat agitated, but retaining her presence of mind, effectually extinguished the fire. Amongst the papers burned partially, but not so burned as to be absolutely irretrievable, was the “ Daughter of Lebanon ; ” and this I have printed, and have intentionally placed it at the end, as appropriately closing a record in which the case of poor Ann the Outcast formed not only the most memorable and the most suggestively pathetic incident, but also *that* which, more than any other, colored—or (more truly I should say) shaped, moulded and remoulded, composed and decomposed—the great body of opium dreams. The search after the lost features of Ann, which I spoke of as pursued in the crowds of London, was in a more proper sense pursued through many a year in dreams. The general idea of a search and a chase reproduced itself in many shapes. The person, the rank, the age, the scenical position, all varied themselves forever ; but the same leading traits more or less faintly remained of a lost Pariah woman, and of some shadowy malice which withdrew her, or attempted to withdraw her, from restoration and from hope. Such is the explanation which I offer why that particular addition, which some of my friends had been authorized to look for, has not in the main been given, nor for the present *could* be given ; and, secondly, why that part which *is* given has been placed in the conspicuous situation (as a closing passage) which it now occupies.

DAMASCUS, first-born of cities, *Om el Denia*,\* mother of generations, that wast before Abraham, that wast before the Pyramids! what sounds are those that, from a postern gate, looking eastwards over secret paths that wind away to the far distant desert, break the solemn silence of an oriental night? Whose voice is that which calls upon the spearmen, keeping watch forever in the turret surmounting the gate, to receive him back into his Syrian home? Thou knowest him, Damascus, and hast known him in seasons of trouble as one learned in the afflictions of man; wise alike to take counsel for the suffering spirit or for the suffering body. The voice that breaks upon the night is the voice of a great evangelist—one of the four; and he is also a great physician. This do the watchmen at the gate thankfully acknowledge, and joyfully they give him entrance. His sandals are white with dust; for he has been roaming for weeks beyond the desert, under the guidance of Arabs, on missions of hopeful benig-nity to Palmyra; † and in spirit he is weary of all

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\* “*Om el Denia*.” — Mother of the World is the Arabic title of Damascus. That it was before Abraham — that is, already an old establishment much more than a thousand years before the siege of Troy, and than two thousand years before our Christian era — may be inferred from Gen. xv. 2; and, by the general consent of all eastern races, Damascus is accredited as taking precedence in age of all cities to the west of the Indus.

† Palmyra had not yet reached its meridian splendor of Grecian development, as afterwards near the age of Aurelian, but it was already a noble city.

things, except faithfulness to God, and burning love to man.

Eastern cities are asleep betimes ; and sounds few or none fretted the quiet of all around him, as the evangelist paced onward to the market-place ; but there another scene awaited him. On the right hand, in an upper chamber, with lattices widely expanded, sat a festal company of youths, revelling under a noonday blaze of light, from cressets and from bright tripods that burned fragrant woods — all joining in choral songs, all crowned with odorous wreaths from Daphne and the banks of the Orontes. Them the evangelist heeded not ; but far away upon the left, close upon a sheltered nook, lighted up by a solitary vase of iron fretwork filled with cedar boughs, and hoisted high upon a spear, behold there sat a woman of loveliness so transcendent, that, when suddenly revealed, as now, out of deepest darkness, she appalled men as a mockery, or a birth of the air. Was she born of woman ? Was it perhaps the angel — so the evangelist argued with himself — that met him in the desert after sunset, and strengthened him by secret talk ? The evangelist went up, and touched her forehead ; and when he found that she was indeed human, and guessed, from the station which she had chosen, that she waited for some one amongst this dissolute crew as her companion, he groaned heavily in spirit, and said, half to himself, but half to her, “ Wert thou, poor, ruined flower, adorned so divinely at thy birth — glorified in such excess, that not Solomon in all his pomp, no, nor even the lilies of the field, can approach thy gifts —

only that thou shouldest grieve the Holy Spirit of God?" The woman trembled exceedingly, and said, "Rabbi, what should I do? For behold! all men forsake me." The evangelist mused a little, and then secretly to himself he said, "Now will I search this woman's heart, whether in very truth it inclineth itself to God, and hath strayed only before fiery compulsion." Turning therefore to the woman, the Prophet\* said, "Listen: I am the messenger of Him whom thou hast not known; of Him that made Lebanon, and the cedars of Lebanon; that made the sea, and the heavens, and the host of the stars; that made the light; that made the darkness; that blew the spirit of life into the nostrils of man. His messenger I am: and from Him all power is given me to bind and to loose, to build and to pull down. Ask, therefore, whatsoever thou wilt — great or small — and through me thou shalt receive it from God. But, my child, ask not amiss. For God is able out of thy own evil asking to weave snares for thy footing.

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\* "*The Prophet*:" — Though a Prophet was not *therefore* and in virtue of that character an Evangelist, yet every Evangelist was necessarily in the scriptural sense a Prophet. For let it be remembered that a Prophet did not mean a *Predicter* or *Fore-shower* of events, except derivatively and inferentially. What *was* a Prophet in the uniform scriptural sense? He was a man, who drew aside the curtain from the secret counsels of Heaven. He declared, or made public, the previously hidden truths of God: and because future events might chance to involve divine truth, therefore a revealer of future events might happen so far to be a Prophet. Yet still small was that part of a Prophet's functions which concerned the foreshowing of events; and not necessarily *any* part.

And oftentimes to the lambs whom he loves he gives by seeming to refuse ; gives in some better sense, or ” (and his voice swelled into the power of anthems) “ in some far happier world. Now, therefore, my daughter, be wise on thy own behalf, and say what it is that I shall ask for thee from God.” But the Daughter of Lebanon needed not his caution ; for immediately dropping on one knee to God’s ambassador, whilst the full radiance from the cedar torch fell upon the glory of a penitential eye, she raised her clasped hands in supplication, and said, in answer to the evangelist asking for a second time what gift he should call down upon her from Heaven, “ Lord, that thou wouldest put me back into my father’s house.” And the evangelist, because he was human, dropped a tear as he stooped to kiss her forehead, saying, “ Daughter, thy prayer is heard in heaven ; and I tell thee that the daylight shall not come and go for thirty times, not for the thirtieth time shall the sun drop behind Lebanon, before I will put thee back into thy father’s house.”

Thus the lovely lady came into the guardianship of the evangelist. She sought not to varnish her history, or to palliate her own transgressions. In so far as she had offended at all, her case was that of millions in every generation. Her father was a prince in Lebanon, proud, unforgiving, austere. The wrongs done to his daughter by her dishonorable lover, because done under favor of opportunities created by her confidence in his integrity, her father persisted in resenting as wrongs done by this injured daughter herself ; and, refusing to her all protection,

drove her, whilst yet confessedly innocent, into criminal compliances under sudden necessities of seeking daily bread from her own uninstructed efforts. Great was the wrong she suffered both from father and lover ; great was the retribution. She lost a churlish father and a wicked lover ; she gained an apostolic guardian. She lost a princely station in Lebanon ; she gained an early heritage in heaven. For this heritage is hers within thirty days, if she will not defeat it herself. And, whilst the stealthy motion of time travelled towards this thirtieth day, behold ! a burning fever desolated Damascus, which also laid its arrest upon the Daughter of Lebanon, yet gently, and so that hardly for an hour did it withdraw her from the heavenly teachings of the evangelist. And thus daily the doubt was strengthened, would the holy apostle suddenly touch her with his hand, and say, "Woman, be thou whole !" or would he present her on the thirtieth day as a pure bride to Christ ? But perfect freedom belongs to Christian service, and she only must make the election.

Up rose the sun on the thirtieth morning in all his pomp, but suddenly was darkened by driving storms. Not until noon was the heavenly orb again revealed ; then the glorious light was again unmasked, and again the Syrian valleys rejoiced. This was the hour already appointed for the baptism of the new Christian daughter. Heaven and earth shed gratulation on the happy festival ; and, when all was finished, under an awning raised above the level roof of her dwelling-house, the regenerate daughter of Lebanon,

looking over the rose-gardens of Damascus, with amplest prospect of her native hills, lay, in blissful trance, making proclamation, by her white baptismal robes, of recovered innocence and of reconciliation with God. And, when the sun was declining to the west, the evangelist, who had sat from noon by the bedside of his spiritual daughter, rose solemnly, and said, "Lady of Lebanon, the day is already come, and the hour is coming, in which my covenant must be fulfilled with thee. Wilt thou, therefore, being now wiser in thy thoughts, suffer God, thy new Father, to give by seeming to refuse; to give in some better sense, or in some far happier world?" But the Daughter of Lebanon sorrowed at these words; she yearned after her native hills; not for themselves, but because there it was that she had left that sweet twin-born sister, with whom from infant days hand-in-hand she had wandered amongst the everlasting cedars. And again the evangelist sat down by her bedside; whilst she by intervals communed with him, and by intervals slept gently under the oppression of her fever. But as evening drew nearer, and it wanted now but a brief space to the going down of the sun, once again, and with deeper solemnity, the evangelist rose to his feet, and said, "O daughter! this is the thirtieth day, and the sun is drawing near to his rest; brief, therefore, is the time within which I must fulfil the word that God spoke to thee by me." Then, because light clouds of delirium were playing about her brain, he raised his pastoral staff, and, pointing it to her temples, rebuked the clouds, and bade that no more

they should trouble her vision, or stand between her and the forests of Lebanon. And the delirious clouds parted asunder, breaking away to the right and to the left. But upon the forests of Lebanon there hung a mighty mass of overshadowing vapors, bequeathed by the morning's storm. And a second time the evangelist raised his pastoral staff, and, pointing it to the gloomy vapors, rebuked them, and bade that no more they should stand between his daughter and her father's house. And immediately the dark vapors broke away from Lebanon to the right and to the left; and the farewell radiance of the sun lighted up all the paths that ran between the everlasting cedars and her father's palace. But vainly the lady of Lebanon searched every path with her eyes for memorials of her sister. And the evangelist, pitying her sorrow, turned away her eyes to the clear blue sky, which the departing vapors had exposed. And he showed her the peace which was there. And then he said, "O daughter! this also is but a mask." And immediately for the third time he raised his pastoral staff, and, pointing it to the fair blue sky, he rebuked it, and bade that no more it should stand between her and the vision of God. Immediately the blue sky parted to the right and to the left, laying bare the infinite revelations that can be made visible only to dying eyes. And the Daughter of Lebanon said to the evangelist, "O father! what armies are these that I see mustering within the infinite chasm?" And the evangelist replied, "These are the armies of Christ, and they are mustering to receive some dear human blossom, some



first-fruits of Christian faith, that shall rise this night to Christ from Damascus." Suddenly, as thus the child of Lebanon gazed upon the mighty vision, she saw bending forward from the heavenly host, as if in gratulation to herself, the one countenance for which she hungered and thirsted. The twin-sister, that should have waited for her in Lebanon, had died of grief, and was waiting for her in Paradise. Immediately in rapture she soared upwards from her couch; immediately in weakness she fell back; and, being caught by the evangelist, she flung her arms around his neck, whilst he breathed into her ear his final whisper, "Wilt thou now suffer that God should give by seeming to refuse?"—"O yes—yes—yes!" was the fervent answer from the Daughter of Lebanon. Immediately the evangelist gave the signal to the heavens, and the heavens gave the signal to the sun; and in one minute after the Daughter of Lebanon had fallen back a marble corpse amongst her white baptismal robes; the solar orb dropped behind Lebanon; and the evangelist, with eyes glorified by mortal and immortal tears, rendered thanks to God that had thus accomplished the word which he spoke through himself to the Magdalen of Lebanon—that not for the thirtieth time should the sun go down behind her native hills, before he had put her back into her Father's house.

## THE ESSENES.\*

### SUPPLEMENTARY.

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At this point, reader, we have come to a sudden close. The paper, or (according to the phraseology of modern journals) the *article*, has reached its terminus. And a very abrupt terminus it seems. Such even to myself it seems; much more, therefore, in all probability, to the reader. But I believe that we must look for the true cause of this abruptness, and the natural remedy of the anger, incident to so unexpected a disappointment, in the records of my own literary movements some twenty-five or thirty years back — at which time this little paper was written. It is possible that I may, concurrently (or nearly so) with this “article,” have written some other “article” expressly and separately on the Essenes — leaving, therefore, to that the elucidation of any obscurities as to *them* which may have gathered in this paper on “Secret Societies.” And, now I think of it, my belief begins to

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\* Written in 1858, as a note to the reprint of an article on “Secret Societies.” See “Historical and Critical Essays,” vol. II., p. 285.

boil up fervently that I did so. "How? *Possible* that I may have written such an article? Don't I know?" Candidly, I do not. "In that case, who *does*?" Why, perhaps one of the three following New England States — Massachusetts, or Connecticut, or Rhode Island. If anybody, insular or continental, is likely to know anything whatever in the concern, it is one of these illustrious communities. But such is the extent of my geographical ignorance, that I am profoundly ignorant in which of the three states it is proper to look for the city of Boston, though I know to a nicety in which of the three it is *not*. Rhode Island, I am positive, does not grow any huge city, unless, like Jonah's gourd, it has rushed into life by one night's growth. So that I have eliminated one quantity at least from the algebraic problem, which must, therefore, be in a very hopeful state towards solution. Boston, meantime, it is, wheresoever that Boston may ultimately be found, *which* (or more civilly, perhaps, *who*) keeps all my accounts of papers and "*paperasses*" (to borrow a very useful French word), all my MSS., finished books — past, present, or to come — tried at the public bar, or *to be* tried; condemned, or only condemnable. It is astonishing how much more Boston knows of my literary acts and purposes than I do myself. Were it not indeed through Boston, hardly the sixth part of my literary undertakings, hurried or deliberate, sound, rotting, or rotten, would ever have reached posterity: which, be it known to thee, most sarcastic of future censors, already most of them *have* reached. For surely to

an "article" composed in 1821, a corpulent reader of 1858 is *posterity* in a most substantial sense. Everything, in short, relating to myself is in the keeping of Boston: and, were it not that the kindness of society in Boston is as notorious to us in England as her intellectual distinction and her high literary rank among cities, I should fear at times that if on any dark December morning, say forty or fifty years ago, I might have committed a forgery (as the best of men will do occasionally), Boston could array against me all the documentary evidence of my peccadillo (such it is now esteemed) before I could have time to abscond. But, if such a forgery exists, I rely on her indulgent sympathy with literary men for allowing me six hours' *law* (as we of old England call it). This little arrangement, however, is private business, not meant for public ears. Returning to general concerns, I am sure that Boston will know whether *anywhere* or *anywhen* I have or have not written a separate "article" on the Essenes. Meantime, as the magnetic cable is not yet laid down across the flooring of the Atlantic, and that an exchange of question and answer between myself and my friends Messrs. Ticknor and Fields will require an *extra* month of time (of "*irreparable tempus*"), I will suppose myself *not* to have written such a paper; and in that case of so faulty an omission, will hold myself debtor, and will on the spot discharge my debt, for a few preliminary explanations that ought to have been made already upon a problem which very few men of letters have had any special motive for investigating. Let me

quicken the reader's interest in the question at issue, by warning him of two important facts, namely :

*First*, that the Church of Rome, in the persons of some amongst her greatest scholars, has repeatedly made known her dissatisfaction with the romance of Josephus. It is dimly apparent, that, so far as she had been able to see her way, this most learned church had found cause to adopt the same conclusion practically as myself—namely, that under some course of masquerading, hard to decipher, the Essenes were neither more nor less than early Christians.

But, *secondly*, although evidently aware that the account of the Essenes by Josephus was, and must have been, an intolerable romance, she had failed to detect the fraudulent motive of Josephus underlying that elaborate fiction ; or the fraudulent tactics by which, throughout that fiction, he had conducted his warfare against the Christians ; or the counter system of tactics by which, were it only for immediate safety, but also with a separate view to self-propagation and continual proselytism, the infant Christian church must have fought under a mask against Josephus and his army of partisans in Jerusalem. It is inexplicable to me how the Church of Rome could for one moment overlook the fierce internecine hostility borne by the Jewish national faction to the Christians, and doubtless most of all to the Judaizing Christians ; of whom, as we know, there were some eminent champions amongst the Christian apostles themselves. Good reason the

**Jew** bigot really had for hating, persecuting and calumniating the Christian revolutionist more rancorously even than the Roman avowed enemy. How stood the separate purposes of these two embattled antagonists — first, Rome Imperial ; secondly, the new-born sect of Christians ? Of these two armies, by far the deadliest was the last. Rome fought against the Jewish nation simply as a little faction, mad with arrogance, that would not by any milder chastisement be taught to know its own place ; and the captives, netted in the great haul at Jerusalem, being looked upon not as honorable prisoners of war, but as rebels — obstinate and incorrigible — were consigned to the stone-quarries of Upper Egypt : a sort of dungeons in which a threefold advantage was gained to the Roman, — namely, 1, that the unhappy captives were held up to the nations as monuments of the ruin consequent on resistance to Rome ; 2, were made profitable to the general exchequer ; 3, were watched and guarded at a cost unusually trivial. But Rome, though stern and harsh, was uniform in her policy ; never capricious ; and habitually too magnanimous to be vindictive. Even amongst these criminals, though so nearly withdrawn from notice, it was not quite impossible that select victims might still win their way back to the regions of hope and light. But, setting these aside, through Rome it was — *in* Rome and *by* Rome — that vast stratifications of this most headstrong and turbulent of eastern tribes cropped out upon many a western soil ; nor was any memorial of the past allowed to speak or to whisper

against them, if only (as children express it) "they would be good." Rome was singularly wise in that matter; and knew that obstinate rebellion, though inconvenient and needing sharp coërcion, argued a strong and aspiring nature. Even now, even already, when as yet the vast wounds were raw and uncicatrized, Rome, the mighty mother, sat in genial incubation upon generations of the old Hebrew blood, destined to reäppear up and down distant centuries in Poland and Russia, in Spain and Portugal; in the Barbary States and other western lands, not to speak of their Asiatic settlements as far east as China. Rome, therefore, was no ultimate or uncompromising enemy to the tribe of Judah.

But the rising sect of Christians brought simple destruction to the name and pretensions of the Jew. The Temple and sacrificial service of the Temple had become an abomination, and the one capital obstacle to the progress of the true religion; and Rome, in destroying this Temple, had been unconsciously doing the work of Christianity. Jews and Jewish usages, and Judaic bigotry, would continue (it is true) to maintain themselves for thousands of years; Jewish fanaticism would even reveal itself again in formidable rebellions. But the combination of power and a national name with the Jewish religion and principles had disappeared from the earth forever with the final destruction of *El Koda*. And the hostility of the Christians was even more absolute than that of Rome; since Christianity denied the whole pretensions and visionary pros-

pects upon which Judaism founded any title to a separate name or nationality. Even without that bitter exasperation of the feud, the quarrels of brothers are almost proverbially the deadliest as regards the chance of reconciliation or compromise ; and in the infancy of the Christian faith nearly all the proselytes were naturally Jews ; so that for a long period the Christians were known in Rome and foreign quarters simply as a variety of provincial Jews, — namely, Nazarenes, or Galileans. In these circumstances the siege of Jerusalem must thus far have widened the schism, that everywhere the enlightened Christian would doubtless have seceded from the faction of those who stood forward as champions of the Jewish independence. This is an aspect of the general history which has not received any special investigation. But there can be no doubt that, for the Christians generally, all narrow and too manifestly hopeless calls of patriotism would be regarded as swallowed up in the transcendent duties of their militant religion. Christian captives may have been found amongst the convicts of the stone-quarries ; but they must have been few, and those only whom some casual separation from their own Christian fraternity had thrown in a state of ignorant perplexity upon their own blind guidance. This consequence, therefore, must have arisen from the siege of Jerusalem, that the Jewish *acharnement* against the Christians, henceforth regarded as political and anti-national enemies, would be inflamed to a frantic excess. And Josephus, suddenly exalted by an act of the vilest adulation to Vespasian (who



was in effect, through his success in Palestine, and through his popularity with the army, already the Emperor elect), instead of visiting the Egyptian quarries as a felon, most unmeritoriously found himself in one hour translated into the meridian sunshine of court favor; and equally through that romantic revolution, and through his own previous dedication to literature, qualified beyond any contemporary for giving effect to his party malice. He would be aware that in the circumstantial accidents of Christianity there was a good deal to attract favor at Rome. Their moral system, and their eleemosynary system of vigilant aid to all their paupers, would inevitably conciliate regard. Even the Jewish theological system was every way fitted to challenge veneration and awe, except in so far as it was associated with the unparalleled and hateful arrogance of Judaism. Now, here for the first time, by the new-born sect of Christians, this grandeur of theologic speculation was exhibited in a state of insulation from that repulsive arrogance. The Jews talked as if the earth existed only for *them*; and as if God took notice only of Jewish service as having any value or meaning. But here were the Christians opening their gates, and proclaiming a welcome to all the children of man. These things were in their favor. And the malignant faction of mere Jewish bigots felt a call to preöccupy the Roman mind with some bold fictions that should forever stop the mouth of the Christian, *whensoever* or *ifsoever* any opening dawned for uttering a gleam of truth. Josephus, followed and supported by Alexandrian

Jews, was evidently the man for this enterprise; not so much, or not so exclusively, by his literary talent (for, doubtless, many in Alexandria, and some in Rome, could have matched him); but he was the man born with the golden spoon in his mouth; he was the second Joseph that should be carried captive from Palestine to Egypt; and on the banks of that ancient Nile should find a Pharaoh, calling himself Cæsar Vespasian, that, upon hearing Joe's interpretation of a dream, should bid him rise up from his prostration as a despairing felon fresh from bearing arms against S. P. Q. R., and take his seat amongst the men whom the king delighted to honor.

Seated there, Joe was equal to a world of mischief; and he was not the man to let his talent lie idle. In what way he would be likely to use his experience, gained amongst the secret society of the Essenes, we may guess. But, to move by orderly steps, let us ask after Mr. Joe's own account of that mysterious body. How and when does he represent the Essenes as arising? I have no book, no vouchers, as generally happens to me; and, moreover, Joseph is not strong in chronology. But I rely on my memory as enabling me to guarantee this general fact—that, at the date of the Josephan record, our shy friends, the Essenes, must, by Joe's reckoning, have existed at least seventy years since Christ's nativity. The reader knows already that I, who make these Essenes the *product* of Christianity under its earliest storms, cannot possibly submit to such a registration. But for the present *assume* it as true. Under such an assump-

tion, it must have been, that many writers, in giving an account of the Jewish philosophic sects, have numbered them as three,—namely, 1, the Pharisees; 2, the Sadducees; 3, the Essenes. And in my childhood there was an *authorized* Bible,—and it must have been a common one, because I remember it as belonging to a female servant, and bearing a written memorandum that it was a gift from her father,—which boldly ranked the Essenes as assessors of the undeniable Pharisees and Sadducees, on that prefatory leaf which assigns the value of a shekel, the measures of capacity, of weight, of distance, &c. Now, then, I would demand of Josephus why it was that Christ, who took such reiterated notice of the elder sects, never once by word or act recognized the Essenes even as existing. Considering their pretensions to a higher purity, or the pretensions in this direction ascribed to them, is it conceivable that Christ should not by one word have countersigned these pretensions if sound, or exposed them if hollow? Or, again, if He for any reason had neglected them, would not some of his disciples, or of his many occasional visitors, have drawn his attention to their code of rules and their reputed habits—to what they professed, and what they were said to have accomplished? Or, finally, if all these chances had failed to secure an evangelical record, can we suppose it possible that no solitary member of that large monastic body, counting (I think, by the report of Josephus) eight thousand brethren, should have been moved sufficiently by the rumors gathering like a cloud up and down Pales-

tine through three consecutive years, about the steps of Christ and his followers, to present himself for a personal interview—so as to form a judgment of Christ, if Christ were even careless of *him* and his brotherhood? We know that Christ was not without interest in the two elder sects—though absolutely sold to worldly interests and intrigues. He himself pointed out a strong argument for allowing weight and consideration to the Pharisees,—namely, that they, so long as the Mosaic economy lasted, were to be regarded with respect as the depositaries of his authority, and the representatives of his system. And it is remarkable enough that here, as elsewhere, at the very moment of heavily blaming the Pharisees, not the less he exacts for them—as a legal due—the popular respect; and this, though perfectly aware that they and the ancient system to which they were attached (a system fifteen hundred years old) would simultaneously receive their doom from that great revolution which he was himself destined to accomplish. The blame which he imputes to them in this place is, that they required others to carry burdens which they themselves would not touch. *That* was a vice of habit and self-indulgence, more venial as a natural concession to selfishness that might have grown upon them imperceptibly; but, in the second case, the blame strikes deeper, for it respects a defect of principle, that must have been conscious and wilful. Moses, we are told, had laid down express laws for the regulation of special emergencies; and these laws, when affecting their own separate interests,

the Pharisees were in the habit of evading under some plea of traditional immunity or professional privilege secured to themselves.

Now, let the reader sternly note down this state of Christ's relations to the great leading sect of the Pharisees. He had high matter of impeachment against them ; and yet, for all that, so profound was his loyalty to the Mosaic system, as a divine revelation, so long as it was not divinely superseded, that he would not lend his sanction to any failure of respect towards the representatives of this system in the fickle populace. On the contrary, he bade them hearken to their instructions, because in doing that they were hearkening to the words of Moses, which were the words of God. The *words* of the Pharisees were consecrated, but not their deeds ; those furnished a false and perilous rule of conduct. Next, as to the Sadducees. This sect, bearing far less of a national and representative character, is less conspicuously brought forward in the New Testament. But it is probable that Christ, though having no motive for the same interest in *them* as in the Pharisees, who might be regarded as heraldic supporters on one side of the national armorial shield, nevertheless maintained a friendly or fraternal intercourse with their leading men as men who laid open one avenue to the central circles of the more aristocratic society in Jerusalem. But had not Christ a special reason for recoiling from the Sadducees, as from those who " say that there is no resurrection of the dead " ? If they really said any such thing, he would have had one reason more than we are cer-

tain of his having had, for calling upon them to make open profession of their presumed faith, and the unknown grounds of that faith. If the Sadducees, as a sect, really did hold the doctrine ascribed to them, it would have been very easy to silence them (that is, in a partial sense to refute them), by forcing them to the conclusion that they had no grounds for holding the *negative* upon the problem of Resurrection, beyond what corresponded to the counter weakness on the side of the *affirmative*. On either side there was confessedly an absolute blank as regarded even the *show* of reasonable grounds for taking a single step in advance. *Guess* you might; but as to any durable conquest of ground, forward or backward — to the right or the left — “to the shield or to the spear” — nobody could contradict you, but then (though uncontradicted) you did not entirely believe yourself. So that, at the worst, the Sadducees could not plausibly have denied the Resurrection, though they might have chosen to favor those who doubted it. Meantime, is it at all certain that the Sadducees *did* hold the imputed opinion? I, for my part, exceedingly hesitate in believing this; and for the following reasons: First, it is most annoying to a man of delicate feelings, that he should find himself pledged to a speculative thesis, and engaged in honor to undertake its defence against all comers, when there happens to be no argument whatsoever on its behalf — not even an absurd one. Secondly, I doubt much whether it would have been *safe* to avow this doctrine in Judea. And, thirdly, whether in *any* circles at Jerusalem, even such as might secure

it a toleration, this doctrine would not have been most unwelcome. For whose favor, therefore, or towards what final object, should such a speculation originally have been introduced, or subsequently have maintained itself? We are told, indeed, that it won no favor, and courted none, from those working classes amongst whom lay the strength of the nationality. This is a clear case. *Active* support, of course, it could not find amongst those who, in *my* opinion, would have been vainly invoked for a *passive* acquiescence or gloomy toleration. But in this case there seems to have been too precipitate a conclusion. Because the natural favorers of scepticism and an irreligious philosophy will be found (if at all) exclusively almost in aristocratic circles, it does not follow that, inversely, aristocratic circles will be found generally to be tainted with such a philosophy. Infidels may belong chiefly to the aristocracy, but not the aristocracy to infidels. It is true that in the luxurious capitals of great kingdoms there are usually found all shapes of licentious speculation; yet, even in the most latitudinarian habits of thinking, such excesses tend in many ways to limit themselves. And in Judea, at that period, the state of society and of social intercourse had not, apparently, travelled beyond the boundaries of a semi-barbarous simplicity. A craving for bold thinking supervenes naturally upon a high civilization, but not upon the elementary civilization of the Jews. A man who should have professed openly so audacious a creed as that ascribed to the Sadducees must have been prepared for lapidation. That tumultuary court—a

Jewish mob, always ready for action, always rich in munitions of war, so long as paving-stones were reasonable in price — made it dangerous for any man in Judea, Jew or Gentile, to wade out of his depth in theologic waters. But how, then, did the Sadducees come by their ugly reputation? I understand it thus: what the scandalous part of the public charged against them was, not openly and defyingly that they held such an irreligious creed, but that such a creed would naturally flow as a consequence from their materialistic tendencies, however much the Sadducees might disavow that consequence. Whatever might be said, fancied, or proved by Bishop Warburton, it is certain that the dominant body of the nation, at the era of Christ, believed in a Resurrection as preliminary to a Final Judgment. And so intense was the Jewish bigotry, since their return from captivity, that assuredly they would have handled any freethinker on such questions very roughly. But, in fact, the counter sect of Pharisees hold up a mirror for showing us by reflection the true popular estimate of the Sadducees. The Pharisees were denounced by Christ, and no doubt were privately condemned in the judgment of all the pious amongst their countrymen, as making void (virtually cancelling) much in the institutions of Moses by their own peculiar (sometimes pretended) traditions: this was their secret character among the devout and the sternly orthodox. But do we imagine that the Pharisees openly accepted such a character? By no means: *that* would have been to court an open feud and schism with the great body of the people. And,



in like manner, the Sadducees had their dark side, from which an answering character was abstracted by their enemies ; but doubtless they themselves treated this character as an odious calumny.

These things premised, the reader is prepared to understand that the reproach of Christ fastened itself upon the offence, not upon the offenders in any single generation, far less upon the individual offenders, who, separately and personally, oftentimes were unconscious parties to a trespass, which, deep though it were as the hidden fountains of life, yet also was ancient and hereditary as the stings of death. The quarrel of Christ, as regarded the unholy frauds of Phariseism, had no bearing upon those individually whom education and elaborate discipline had conducted to the vestibule of that learned college by whom alone, at the distance of a millennium and of half a millennium, the Law and the Prophets were still kept alive in the understanding and in the reverence of the unlettered multitude.

Apart from their old hereditary crime of relaxing and favoring the relaxation of the Mosaic law, the Pharisees especially, but in some degree both sects, were depositaries of all the erudition — archæologic, historic, and philologic — by which a hidden clue could be sought, or a lost clue could be recovered, through the mazes of the ancient prophecies, in times which drew near, by all likelihood, to their gradual accomplishment and consummation. Supposing that the one sect was even truly and not calumniously reproached with undervaluing the spiritual Future, can we imagine them so superfluously to have courted

popular odium, as by carrying before them a proclamation of the gloomy creed, which must for any purpose be useless? The answer is found precisely in the parallel case of the counter sect. Because Christ reproached them with virtually neutralizing the whole rigor of the law by their private traditions, are we to suppose the Pharisees to have sent before them a banner, making proclamation that "We are the sect who make void the Law of Moses by human devices of false, counterfeit traditions"? So far from this, even the undeniable abuses and corruptions had probably grown up and strengthened through successive ages of negligence and accumulated contributions of unintentional error. The special authors of the corruptions and dangerous innovations were doubtless generations, and not individuals. The individual members of both sects must have embodied the whole available learning of the nation. They jointly were for the Hebrew race what the Brahmins were, and locally are, for the Hindoos; what the childish "*literati*" of China are to the childish race of the Chinese; what the three learned professions of Law, Medicine, and the Church, are in Christian lands. For many purposes, the Pharisees and Sadducees were indispensable associates; and, according to their personal merits of integrity, sincerity, and goodness of heart, there can be little doubt that Christ honored multitudes amongst them with marks of his personal regard.

Now, then, under such circumstances, can we suppose it possible that a sect, approaching by traits of resemblance far deeper and more conspicuous to the

coming sect of Christians which Christ was laboring to build up, should have gone unnoticed by *Him*, or should themselves have left Christ unnoticed and unapproached? Chronology of itself overwhelmingly confounds Josephus. According to him, a sect, whose origin is altogether unaccounted for, suddenly walks forward out of darkness; and when called upon to unfold the characteristics of this sect, which nobody had ever named before himself, he presents you with such a coarse travesty of the Christians as to usages and doctrines,—whom, doubtless, he knew by having helped to persecute them,—that we read at once the full-blown knavery of a scoundrel who had motives more than one or two for suborning, as the anticipators of every feature that could fascinate men in Christianity, a secret society really of Christians, but to him and other members, not trustworthy, masking itself as a society of Jews. It would too much lengthen a note already too long, if I were to expose circumstantially the false coloring impressed upon the Christian scheme by one who was too unprincipled and worldly even to comprehend the Christian elements. Enough, however, remains of the archetype in the report of Josephus, to reveal, as lurking beneath the disguise, and gleaming through it, an undeniable Christian original; so that here, as I have said previously, we are faced suddenly by a Christianity before Christ, and a Christianity without Christ.\*

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\* O, no, will be the reply of some critics; not *without* Christ But I answer — if before Christ, then necessarily *without* Christ

In conclusion, I will confess to the reader, in the foolish excess of my candor, that amongst those who have most inclined to express dissatisfaction (yet as a final, not as an initiatory feeling) with my hypothesis accounting for the Essenes, are several of my own oldest friends — men distinguished (for one moment I wish they were not) by searching judgment and by extensive learning. Does n't the reader think that perhaps much learning may have made them mad? Certainly they demand unreasonable proofs, considering that time (not to mention other agencies) upon many a topic has made us all bank-

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And besides the profound objection from the whole flagrant plagiarism of the moral scheme, the other capital objection remains : How did these men, if chronologically anterior to Christ, miss an interview with Christ ; or, if not a personal interview, at least a judgment of Christ sealing their pretensions, or a judgment of Christ sealing their condemnation ? *My* Essenes escaped this personal interview and this judgment approving or condemning, simply because, chronologically, they were not contemporaries of Christ, but by twenty or twenty-five years younger than the Crucifixion. They were, in fact, a masquerading body of Christians — an offshoot of Christians that happened to be resident in Judea at a crisis of fiery persecution. Fortunately for *them*, one great advantage befell them, which in subsequent Roman persecutions they wanted, namely, that they and their persecutors occupied common ground in much of their several creeds, which facilitated the deep disguise. Both alike adopted the Jewish Prophets into the basis of their faith ; both alike held the truth of all the other Scriptures — for instance, of the Law itself, though differing as to its practical validity for the future. Hence, by confining themselves to those parts of the Old Testament which both adopted, the Christians, masked as Essenes, were able to deceive and evade the most cruel of their enemies.

rupt in satisfactory argument, Mr. Joe, I presume, not at all less than myself. A little daughter of mine, when about two years old, used sometimes to say at the dinner-table, "Please give me too much." My learned friends, it sometimes strikes me, are borrowing *her* sentiment, and, with no less gravity than hers, are insisting on having "too much" of certainty in this delicate case—too much, in fact, and too complex evidence for the *why* and the *how*, for the *where* and the *when*, of a masonic brotherhood, that was, by the very tenure and primary motive of its existence, confessedly a *secret* brotherhood. In the spirit of honest Sancho's Andalusian proverb, it seems to me that my too learned friends are seeking for "better bread than is made of wheat." Since, really, when you *subpœna* a witness out of the great deeps of time, divided from yourself by fifty-five generations, you are obliged to humor him, and to show him special indulgence; else he grows "crusty" on your hands, and keeps back even that which by gentler solicitation might have been won from him.

Meantime, I have retouched the evidence a little, so that he who was restive formerly may now be tractable; and have attempted to coax the witnesses in a way which is but fair, as no more than balancing and corresponding to those gross tamperings practised (we may be sure) by the Jew courtier. Mr. Joe, we may rely upon it, when packing the jury, did his best. I may have an equal right to do my worst. It happens that my theory and Mr. Joe's are involved alternatively in each other. If you

reject Joe's, — a thing that I suppose inevitable, — this throws you by rebound upon mine ; if you are inclined to reject mine, — a case that is supportable by human fortitude, — then you find yourself pitched violently into Mr. Joe's ; a case that is *not* supportable by any fortitude, armed with any philosophy. In taking leave, I add, as an extra argument against the possibility that Essenism *could* have been contemporary with the birth of Christianity, this ugly objection. We may suppose that a Jew, in maintaining the historic truth of Essenism, would endeavor to evade the arguments so naturally emerging from the internal relations of this secret sect to those of the avowed sect called Christians, and at the same time to ignore the vast improbability that two sects wearing features so sisterly should have sailed past each other silently, and exchanging no salutes, no questions of reciprocal interest, no mutual recognitions, no interchange of gratulation in the midst of departing storms, or of solemn valediction amongst perilous mists that were slowly gathering. The Jew might argue, in explanation, that the Essenes, under the form of ascetic moralists, would from this single element of their system derive a prejudice against the founder of Christianity, as one who in his own person had deemed it advisable, for the attainment of social influence in the Judea of that day, and for the readier propagation of truth, to adopt a more liberal and genial mode of living. For the stern ascetic may win reverence, but never wins confidence, so that the heart of his nearer is still for *him* under a mask. My argument

being—that the Essenes could not have been contemporary with the great moral teacher (in fact, the revolutionary teacher) of their own century, without seeking *Him*, or *His* seeking *them*—we may suppose the Jew taking his stand plausibly enough on a primal alienation of the Essenes, through incongruities of social habits, such (let us suppose, by way of illustration) as would naturally repel Quakers or Moravians in our own day from any great moral teacher wearing a brilliant exterior, and familiar with courts and princes. Such an estrangement would be matter of regret to all the wise and liberal even of those two sects, but it would be natural; and it would sufficiently explain the non-intercourse objected, without any call for resorting to the plea of anachronism, as the true bar of separation.

*Answer:*—It is true that any deep schism in social habits would *tend* to divide the two parties—the great moral teacher on the one side, from the great monastic fraternity on the other, that stood aloof from the world, and the temptations of the world. *Pro tanto*, such a schism would pull in that direction; though I am of opinion that the least magnanimous of dissenting bodies would allow a transcendent weight (adequate to the crushing of any conceivable resistance) to the conspicuous originality and searching pathos of Christ's moral doctrine. Four great cases, or memorable *cartoons*, in the series of Christ's doctrinal “shows” (to borrow the Eleusinian term), in 1839–40, powerfully affected the Mahometan Affghan Sirdars, — namely, 1, the model

of prayer which he first and last, among all teachers, left as a guiding legacy to infinite generations ; 2, the model of purity which he raised aloft in the little infant suddenly made the centre of his moral system as the normal form of innocence and simplicity of heart ; 3, the Sermon on the Mount, which, by one sudden illumination, opened a new world in man's secret heart ; 4, the translation of moral tests from the old and gross one of palpable acts to thoughts, and the most aerial of purposes, as laid down in the passage, "He that looketh upon a woman," &c. These four revelations of the Christian Founder being once reported to the pretended monastic body, must have caught the affections, and have prompted an insurmountable craving for personal intercourse with such a "Prophet;" that is, in the Hebrew sense of *Prophet*, such a revealer out of darkness. In Affghanistan, amongst blind, prejudiced, sometimes fanatical, Mahometans, these extraordinary moral revelations had power deeply to shake and move ; could they have had less in Judea ? But, finally, suppose they had, and that an ascetic brotherhood refused all intercourse with a teacher *not* ascetic, so much the more zealously would they have courted such intercourse with a teacher memorably and in an ultimate degree ascetic. Such a teacher was John the Baptist. Here, then, stands the case : in an age which Josephus would have us believe to have been the flourishing age of the Essenes, there arise two great revolutionary powers, who are also great teachers and legislators in the world of ethics. The



first, by a short space of time, was the Baptist;\* the second was Christ. The one was uniquely ascetic, declining not only the luxuries, but the slenderest physical appliances against the wrath of the elements, or the changes of the seasons. The other described himself as one who came eating and drinking, in conformity to the common usages of men. With neither of these great authorities is there any record of the Essenes having had the most trivial intercourse. Is *that* reconcilable with their alleged existence on a large scale in an age of deep agitation and fervent inquiry?

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\* That John the Baptist was a moral teacher, as well as a herald of coming changes, may be inferred from the fact (noticed by the Evangelists), that the military body applied to him for moral instruction, which appeal must have grown out of the general invitation to do so involved in the ordinary course of his ministrations, and in the terms of his public preaching. In what sense he was to be held the harbinger of Christ, over and above his avowed mission for announcing the fast approaching advent of the Messiah, I have elsewhere suggested, in a short comment on the word *μετανοια*; which word, as I contend, cannot properly be translated *repentance*; for it would have been pure cant to suppose that age, or any age, as more under a summons to repentance than any other assignable. I understand by *μετανοια* a revolution of thought—a great intellectual change—in the accepting a new centre for all moral truth from Christ; which centre it was that subsequently caused all the offence of Christianity to the Roman people.

## ÆLIUS LAMIA.\*

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For a period of centuries there has existed an enigma, dark and insoluble as that of the Sphinx, in the text of Suetonius. Isaac Casaubon, as modest as he was learned, had vainly besieged it; then, in a mood of revolting arrogance, Joseph Scaliger; Ernesti; Gronovius; many others; and all without a gleam of success. Had the tread-mill been awarded (as might have been wished) to failure of attempts at solution, under the construction of having traded in false hopes—in *smoke-selling*, as the Roman law entitled it—one and all of these big-wigs must have mounted that aspiring machine of Tantalus, *volentes volentes*.

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\* In this case I acknowledge no shadow of doubt. I have a list of conjectural decipherings applied by classical doctors to desperate lesions and abscesses in the text of famous classic authors; and I am really ashamed to say that my own emendation stands *facile princeps* among them all. I must repeat, however, that this preëminence is only that of luck; and I must remind the critic, that, in judging of this case, he must not do as one writer did on the first publication of this little paper—namely, entirely lose sight of the main incident in the legend of Orpheus and Eurydice. Never perhaps on this earth was so threatening a whisper, a whisper so portentously significant, uttered between man and man in a single word, as in that secret suggestion of an *Orpheutic voice* where a *wife* was concerned.

The passage in Suetonius which so excruciatingly (but so unprofitably) has tormented the wits of such scholars as have sat in judgment upon it through a period of three hundred and fifty years, arises in the tenth section of his Domitian. That prince, it seems, had displayed in his outset considerable promise of moral excellence; in particular, neither rapacity nor cruelty was then apparently any feature in his character. Both qualities, however, found a pretty large and early development in his advancing career, but cruelty the largest and earliest. By way of illustration, Suetonius rehearses a list of distinguished men, clothed with senatorian or even consular rank, whom he had put to death upon allegations the most frivolous; amongst them, Aelius Lamia, a nobleman whose wife he had torn from him by open and insulting violence. It may be as well to cite the exact words of Suetonius: \* “*Aelium Lamiam (interemit) ob suspiciosos quidem, verum et veteres et innoxios jocos; quòd post abductam uxorem laudanti vocem suam — dixerat, Heu taceo; quòdque Tito hortanti se ad alterum matrimonium, responderat μή καὶ σὸ γαμῆσαι θέλεις;*” — *Anglicè*, Aelius Lamia he put to death on account of certain jests; jests

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\* The original Latin seems singularly careless. Every (even though inattentive) reader says — *Innoxios*, harmless? But if these jests were harmless, how could he call them *suspiciosos* calculated to rouse suspicion? The way to justify the drift of Suetonius in reconciliation with his precise words is thus — on account of certain repartees which undeniably had borne a sense justifying some uneasiness and jealousy at the time of utterance, but which the event had shown to be practically harmless, whatever had been the intention, and which were now obsolete.

liable to some jealousy, but, on the other hand, of old standing, and that had in fact proved harmless as regarded practical consequences—namely, that to one who praised his voice as a singer he had replied, *Heu taceo*; and that, on another occasion, in reply to the Emperor Titus, when urging him to a second marriage, he had said, “What now, I suppose *you* are looking out for a wife?”

The latter jest is intelligible enough, stinging, and in a high degree witty. As if the young men of the Flavian family could fancy no wives but such as they had won by violence from other men, he affects in a bitter sarcasm to take for granted that Titus, in counselling his friends to marry, was simply contemplating the first step towards creating a fund of eligible wives. The primal qualification of any lady as a consort being, in Flavian eyes, that she had been torn away violently from a friend, it became evident that the preliminary step towards a Flavian wedding was, to persuade some incautious friend into marrying, and thus putting himself into a capacity of being robbed. Such, at least in the stinging jest of Lamia, was the Flavian rule of conduct. And his friend Titus, therefore, simply as the brother of Domitian, simply as a Flavian, he affected to regard as indirectly and provisionally extending his own conjugal fund, whenever he prevailed on a friend to select a wife.

The latter jest, therefore, when once apprehended, speaks broadly and bitingly for itself. But the other,—what can it possibly mean? For centuries has that question been reiterated; and hitherto with-

out advancing by one step nearer to solution. Isaac Casaubon, who about two hundred and fifty years since was the leading oracle in this field of literature, writing an elaborate and continuous commentary upon Suetonius, found himself unable to suggest any real aids for dispersing the thick darkness overhanging the passage. What he says is this : “ Parum satisfaciunt mihi interpretes in explicatione hujus Lamiæ dicti. Nam quod putant *Heu taceo* suspirium esse ejus — indicem doloris ob abductam uxorem magni sed latentis, nobis non ita videtur ; sed notatam potius fuisse tyrannidem principis, qui omnia in suo genere pulchra et excellentia possessoribus eriperet, unde necessitas incumbere sua bona dissimulandi celandique.” In English thus : Not at all satisfactory to me are the commentators in the explanation of the *dictum* (here equivalent to *dicterium*) of Lamia. For, whereas they imagine *Heu taceo* to be a sigh of his, — the record and indication of a sorrow, great though concealed, on behalf of the wife that had been violently torn away from him, — me, I confess, the case does not strike in that light ; but rather that a satiric blow was aimed at the despotism of the sovereign prince, who tore away from their possessors all objects whatsoever marked by beauty or distinguished merit in their own peculiar class ; whence arose a pressure of necessity for dissembling and hiding their own advantages. “ *Sic esse exponendum,*” that such is the true interpretation (continues Casaubon,) “ *docent illa verba* [LAUDANTI VOCEM SUAM] ” (we are instructed by these words), [to one who praised his singing voice, &c.]

This commentary was obscure enough, and did no particular honor to the native good sense of Isaac Casaubon, usually so conspicuous. For, whilst proclaiming a settlement, in reality it settled nothing. Naturally, it made but a feeble impression upon the scholars of the day; and not long after the publication of the book, Casaubon received from Joseph Scaliger a friendly but gasconading letter, in which that great scholar brought forward a new reading — namely, *εὑρισκω*, to which he assigned a profound technical value as a musical term. No person even affected to understand Scaliger. Casaubon himself, while treating so celebrated a man with kind and considerate deference, yet frankly owned that, in all his vast reading, he had never met with this Greek word in such a sense. But, without entering into any dispute upon that verbal question, and conceding to Scaliger the word and his own interpretation of the word, no man could understand in what way this new resource was meant to affect the ultimate question at issue — namely, the extrication of the passage from that thick darkness which overshadowed it.

“*As you were*” (to speak in the phraseology of military drill), was in effect the word of command. All things reverted to their original condition; and two centuries of darkness again enveloped this unsolved or insoluble perplexity of Roman literature. The darkness had for a few moments seemed to be unsettling itself in preparation for flight; but immediately it rolled back again; and through seven generations of men this darkness was heavier, because

now loaded with disappointment, and in that degree less hopeful than before.

At length then, I believe, all things are ready for the explosion of a catastrophe: "Which catastrophe," I hear some malicious reader whispering, "is doubtless destined to glorify himself" (meaning the unworthy writer of this little paper). I cannot deny it. A truth is a truth. And, since no medal, nor ribbon, nor cross of any known order, is disposable for the most brilliant successes in dealing with desperate (or what may be called *condemned*) passages in pagan literature, — mere sloughs of despond that yawn across the pages of many a heathen dog, poet and orator, that I could mention, — so much the more reasonable it is that a large allowance should be served out of boasting and self-glorification to all those whose merits upon this field national governments have neglected to proclaim. The Scaligers, both father and son, I believe, acted upon this doctrine; and drew largely by anticipation upon that reversionary bank which they conceived to be answerable for such drafts. Joseph Scaliger, it strikes me, was drunk when he wrote his letter on the present occasion, and in that way failed to see (what Casaubon saw clearly enough) that he had commenced shouting before he was out of the wood. For my own part, if I go so far as to say that the result promises, in the Frenchman's phrase, "to cover me with glory," I beg the reader to remember that the idea of "covering" is of most variable extent. The glory may envelop one in a voluminous robe, a princely mantle that may require a long suite

of train-bearers, or may pinch and vice one's arms into that succinct garment (now superannuated) which some eighty years ago drew its name from the distinguished Whig family in England of Spencer.

All being now ready, and the arena being cleared of competitors (for I suppose it is fully understood that everybody but myself has retired from the contest), let it be clearly understood what it is that the contest turns upon. Supposing that one had been called, like Œdipus of old, to a turn-up with that venerable girl the Sphinx, most essential it would have been that the clerk of the course (or however you designate the judge, the umpire, &c.) should have read the riddle propounded; how else judge of the solution? At present the elements of the case to be decided stand thus:

A Roman noble, a man in fact of senatorial rank, has been robbed, robbed with violence, and with cruel scorn, of a lovely young wife, to whom he was most tenderly attached. But by whom? the indignant reader demands. By a younger son\* of the

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\* But holding what rank, and what precise station, at the time of the outrage? At this point I acknowledge a difficulty. The criminal was in this case Domitian, the younger son of the tenth Cæsar, namely, of Vespasian; 2dly, younger brother of Titus, the eleventh Cæsar; and himself, 3dly, under the name of Domitian, the twelfth of the Cæsars. Now, the difficulty lies here, which yet I have never seen noticed in any book: was this violence perpetrated before or after Domitian's assumption of the purple? If *after*, how, then, could the injured husband have received that advice from Titus (as to repairing his loss by a second marriage), which suggested the earliest *bon-mot* between Titus and Lamia?



Roman Emperor Vespasian. For some years the wrong has been borne in silence. The sufferer knew himself to be powerless as against such an oppressor; and that to show symptoms of impotent hatred was but to call down thunderbolts upon his own head. Generally, therefore, prudence had guided him. *Patience* had been the word; *silence*, and below all, the deep, deep word, *watch and wait!* It is, however, an awful aggravation of such afflictions, that the lady herself might have coöperated in the later stages of the tragedy with the purposes of the imperial ruffian. Lamia had been suffered to live, because, as a living man, he yielded up into the hands of his tormentor his whole capacity of suffering; no part of it escaped the hellish range of his enemy's eye. But this advantage for the torturer had also

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Yet, again, if not after but before, how was it that Lamia had not invoked the protection of Vespasian, or of Titus — the latter of whom enjoyed a theatrically fine reputation for equity and moderation? By the way, another *bon-mot* arose out of this brutal Domitian's evil reputation. He had a taste for petty cruelties; especially upon the common house-fly, which, in the Syrian mythology, enjoys the condescending patronage of the god Belzebub. Flies did Cæsar massacre, in spite of Belzebub, by bushels; and the carnage was the greater, because this Apollyon of flies was always armed; since the metallic *stylus*, with which the Roman ploughed his waxen tablets in writing memoranda, was the best of weapons in a pitched battle with a fly; in fact, Cæsar had an unfair advantage. Meantime this habit of his had become notorious; and one day a man, wishing for a private audience, inquired in the antechambers if Cæsar were alone? *Quite alone*, was the reply. "Are you sure? Is nobody with him?" *Nobody: not so much as a fly (ne musca quidam).*

its weak and doubtful side. Use and monotony might secretly be wearing away the edge of the organs on and through which the corrosion of the inner heart proceeded. And when that point was reached—a callousness which neutralized the further powers of the tormentor—it then became the true policy of such a fiend (as being his one sole unexhausted resource) to inflict death. On the whole, therefore, putting together the facts of the case, it seems to have been resolved that he should die; but previously that he should drink off a final cup of anguish, the bitterest that had yet been offered. The lady herself, again, had she also suffered in sympathy with her martyred husband? That must have been known to a certainty in the outset of the case by him that knew too profoundly on what terms of love they had lived. Possibly to resist indefinitely might have menaced herself with ruin, whilst offering no benefit to her husband. There is besides this dreadful fact, placed ten thousand times on record, that the very goodness of the human heart in such a case ministers fuel to the moral degradation of a female combatant. Any woman, and exactly in proportion to the moral sensibility of her nature, finds it painful to live in the same house with a man not odiously repulsive in manners or in person on terms of eternal hostility. What it was circumstantially that passed, long since has been overtaken and swallowed up by the vast oblivions of time. This only survives—namely, that what Lamia had said gave signal offence in the highest quarter, was not forgotten, and that his death followed eventually. But what was it that he *did*

say? That is precisely the question, and the whole question which we have to answer. At present we know, and we do *not* know, what it was that he said. We find bequeathed to us by history the munificent legacy of two words — involving eight letters — which in their present form, with submission to certain grandees of classic literature, more particularly to the scoundrel Joe Scaliger (son of the old original ruffian, J. C. Scaliger), mean exactly nothing. These two words must be regarded as the raw material upon which we have to work; and out of these we are required to turn out a rational, but also, be it observed, a memorably caustic saying for Aelius Lamia, under the following five conditions: First, it must allude to his wife, as one that is lost to him irrecoverably; secondly, it must glance at a gloomy tyrant who bars him from rejoining her; thirdly, it must reply to the compliment which had been paid to the sweetness of his own voice; fourthly, it should in strictness contain some allusion calculated not only to irritate, but even to alarm or threaten his jealous and vigilant enemy, else how was it suspicious? fifthly, doing all these things, it ought also to absorb, as its own main elements, the eight letters contained in the present senseless words — “*Hæu taceo.*”

Here is a monstrous quantity of work to throw upon any two words in any possible language. Even Shakspeare’s clown,\* when challenged to furnish a catholic answer applicable to all conceivable

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\* See *All’s Well that Ends Well*, Act ii., Scene 2.

occasions, cannot do it in less than nine letters, namely, *O lord, sir!* I, for my part, satisfied that the existing form of *Heu taceo* was mere indictable and punishable nonsense, but yet that this nonsense must enter as chief element into the stinging sense of Lamia, gazed for I cannot tell how many weeks (weeks, indeed! say years) at these impregnable letters, viewing them sometimes as a fortress that I was called upon to escalate, sometimes as an anagram that I was called upon to reorganize into the life which it had lost through some dislocation of arrangement. One day I looked at it through a microscope; next day I looked at it from a distance through a telescope. Then I reconnoitred it downwards from the top round of a ladder; then upwards, in partnership with Truth, from the bottom of a well. Finally, the result in which I landed, and which fulfilled all the conditions laid down, was this: Let me premise, however, what *at any rate* the existing darkness attests, that some disturbance of the text must in some way have arisen, whether from the gnawing of a rat, or the spilling of some obliterating fluid at this point of some unique MS. It is sufficient for us that the vital word has survived. I suppose, therefore, that Lamia had replied to the friend who praised the sweetness of his voice, "Sweet, is it? Ah, would to Heaven it might prove so sweet as to be even Orpheutic!" Ominous in this case would be the word Orpheutic to the ears of Domitian; for every schoolboy knows that this means a *wife-revoking voice*. Let me remark that there is such a legitimate word as *Orpheutaceam*,

and in that case the Latin repartee of Lamia would stand thus : *Suavem dixisti? Quam vellem et Orpheutaceam*. But, perhaps, reader, you fail to recognize in this form our old friend *Heu taceo*. But here he is to a certainty, in spite of the rat ; and in a different form of letters the compositor will show him up to you, as *vellem et Orp* [HEU TACEAM]. Here, then, shines out at once, (1) Eurydice the lovely wife ; (2) detained by the gloomy tyrant Pluto ; (3) who, however, is forced into surrendering her to her husband, whose voice (the sweetest ever known) drew stocks and stones to follow him, and finally his wife ; (4) the word Orpheutic involves, therefore, an alarming threat, showing that the hope of recovering the lady still survived ; (5) we now find involved in the restoration all the eight, or perhaps nine, letters of the erroneous (and for so long a time unintelligible) form.

# CHINA.

[1857.]

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## PRELIMINARY NOTE.

WHAT is the justifying purpose of this pamphlet<sup>1</sup> at this moment? Its purpose is to diffuse amongst those of the middle classes, whose daily occupations leave them small leisure for direct personal inquiries, some sufficient materials for appreciating the *justice* of our British pretensions and attitude in our coming war with China. It is a question frequently raised amongst public journalists, whether we British are entitled to that exalted distinction which sometimes we claim for ourselves, and which sometimes is claimed on our behalf, by neutral observers, in the national practice of morality. There is no call in this place for so large a discussion ; but, most undoubtedly, in one feature of so grand a distinction, in one reasonable presumption for inferring a profounder national conscientiousness, as diffused among the British people, stands upon record, in the pages of history, this memorable fact, that always at the opening (and at intervals throughout the progress) of any war, there has been much and angry discussion amongst us British as to the equity of its origin, and the moral reasonableness of its objects. Whereas, on the Continent, no man ever heard of a question being raised, or a faction being embattled, upon any demur (great or small) as to the moral grounds of a war. To be able to face the trials of a war — *that* was its justification ; and to win victories — *that* was its ratification for the conscience.

The dispute at Shanghai, in 1848, equally as regards the origin

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of that dispute, and as regards the Chinese mode of conducting it, will give the reader a key to the Chinese character and the Chinese policy. To begin by making the most arrogant resistance to the simplest demands of justice, to end by cringing in the lowliest fashion before the guns of a little war-brig, there we have, in a representative abstract, the Chinese system of law and gospel. The equities of the present war are briefly summed up in this one question : What is it that our brutal enemy wants from us ? Is it some concession in a point of international law, or of commercial rights, or of local privilege, or of traditional usage, that the Chinese would exact ? Nothing of the kind. It is simply a license, guaranteed by ourselves, to call us in all proclamations by scurrilous names ; and, secondly, with our own consent, to inflict upon us, in the face of universal China, one signal humiliation. Amongst the total household of Christians, who is he that is most pointedly insulted and trampled under foot ? It is the *Cagot* of the Pyrenees. Amongst Christian nations, again, which is the most fanatically arrogant ? It is the Spanish. Yet this fanatic Spaniard does not inflict upon this downtrodden *Cagot* an insult so deep as that which is insisted on by the Chinese towards us. The Spaniard never disputed the *Cagot's* participation in Christian hopes ; never meditated the exclusion of the poor outcast from his parish church ; he contented himself with framing a separate door for the *Cagot*, so low that he could not pass underneath its architrave, unless by assuming a cringing and supplicating attitude. But us — the freemen of the earth by emphatic precedence — us, the leaders of civilization, would this putrescent<sup>2</sup> tribe of hole-and-corner assassins take upon themselves, not to force into entering Canton by an ignoble gate, but to exclude from it altogether, and forever. Briefly, then, for this licensed scurrility, in the first place ; and, in the second, for this foul indignity of a spiteful exclusion from a right four times secured by treaty, it is that the Chinese are facing the unhappy issues of war. And if any apologist for the Chinese, such as Mr. Cobden, denies this view of the case, let him be challenged to *name* that Chinese object which has been here overlooked. Simply this one statement, if it cannot be contradicted, settles all questions as to the justice (on *our* side) of the coming war.

## PREFACE.

THE Chinese question is that which, at this moment [April 5, 1857], possesses the public mind, almost to the exclusion of all others, and is likely to do so for the next six months.<sup>8</sup> This paramount importance of the two-headed Chinese question is now speaking through organs that, in the most eminent sense, are *nationally* representative. China it is that has moulded, with a decision liable to no misinterpretation, the character of the new Parliament. Suddenly, summarily, without notice or warning, five leading members of the last Parliament, Messrs. Cobden, Bright, Gibson, Miall, and Fox, all charmed against any ordinary assault by the strength of their personal claims, having not only great services to plead, but talents of the quality peculiarly fitted for senatorial duties, have been thrown out and rejected, with the force of a volcanic explosion, by distinguished electoral bodies, on the sole ground of their ruinous and unpatriotic votes with respect to China.

Not one of these gentlemen would seem to have at all expected his doom. And this strengthens the inference, which other indications favor, that they have not studied Chinese politics, or in any reasonable degree acquainted themselves with the Chinese character. Blind to these main elements in the question, Messrs. Cobden, &c., were unavoidably blind also to the value likely to be put upon those elements by constituents who were *not* blind. This



ignorance about China manifests itself everywhere. In the Upper House of Parliament the most eminent statesmen, Lords Derby, Grey, Malmesbury, and others, betrayed inexcusable ignorance. Not that China is naturally entitled to any very large proportion of attention from our public men, — the questions raised by China being generally too few and simple to require it, — but in the agitation of a sudden crisis, throwing deep shadows of uncertainty over the immediate prospects of our far-distant brethren, and calling for strong measures on our part, most undoubtedly no man should have come forward to advise without earnest study of the case ; much less to flatter with encouragement, from the bosom of our Senate, the infamous policy of our Cantonese enemies. Even profounder ignorance of everything Chinese is exhibited by Mr. Roebuck. Would it have been credible, one month back, that an upright, high-minded, public servant like Mr. Roebuck, sometimes giving way to an irritable temperament too much for his own dignity, but always under the control of just intentions, would, upon any possible temptation from partisanship, have allowed himself to speak in a complimentary tone of the ruffian, larcinous, poisoning Canton ? Mr. Roebuck, by way of describing and appraising this Chinese city, tells the manly and honorable people of Sheffield that it is very much like their own town ; that its main characteristic is, to have a strong will of its own, and to be bold in expressing it. And he leaves it altogether doubtful whether the compliment, in this comparison of the two cities,

is meant for Canton or for Sheffield. Sheffield, like many towns whose population is chiefly composed of ingenious and self-dependent artisans, I have long known and admired as a stubborn, headstrong, sometimes, perhaps, turbulent community, but always moving under the impulse of noble objects. The Sheffield that *I* have known never had its streets incrustured with layers of blood from unoffending foreigners, never offered bribes for wholesale murder, never gave occasion to its chief magistrate for alleging that, in tempting men to poison unknown strangers, he had simply yielded to the coercion of the town mob. Canton has risen on foundations laid by British money. As a city distinguished from its port, Canton was nothing until reared and cherished by English gold. And the vile population of the place, which has furnished a by-word of horror to all European residents in the Chinese seas, has been fed and supported in every stage of its growth by our British demand for tea. The sorters, the packers, the porters, the boatmen, and multitudes beside in ministerial trades, live and flourish upon what virtually are English wages. And it is these English, above all other foreigners, but else in default of English *any* foreigners whatsoever, that the indigenous murderer of Canton cuts to pieces as often as he finds him alone in the lanes of Canton, or feebly accompanied. Such a roll-call of murders as pollutes the annals of Canton is not matched by any other city, ancient or modern. And yet Mr. Roebuck assured Sheffield, from the hustings, that she was favorably distinguished among

cities by her resemblance to Canton. And in the midst of all this, whilst ignoring the testimony of our able and experienced countrymen resident on the spot, and locally familiar with every foot of the ground, and with every popular rumor that blows, never once had Mr. Roebuck the candor to acknowledge, for the arrest of judgment among his auditors, that every Frenchman, Belgian, American, and men of most other European nations, had abetted us, had joined us in warfare, when the circumstances had allowed (as the Americans,<sup>4</sup> for instance, though not with all the success that might have been expected); and finally, whether joining our arms or not (which, in fact, until equally insulted with ourselves, they could not do), all the official representatives of France — consul, superintendent, and naval officer — had subscribed the most cordial certificates of our intolerable provocations, of our forbearance in calling for reparation, and of our continued moderation in exacting that reparation when it could no longer be hoped for from the offenders. Is Mr. Roebuck himself aware that the two great leaders of civilization in Western Christendom have joined in justifying our conduct in the Canton waters? If he is, how came it that, in fair dealing, he did not mention this at Sheffield? If not aware of it, how came he to think himself qualified for discussing this Chinese question?

It is but a trifle, after this flagrant body of misrepresentation, to cite the errors of Lord Dalkeith, when speaking from the county hustings in Edinburgh (Tuesday, March 31). It does honor to his con-

scientiousness that, whilst erroneously supposing the Arrow to be confessedly no British vessel, from the premature letter of Sir John Bowring to Consul Parkes, he gave his vote in that way which seemed best to mark his sense of what then appeared to be our British injustice ; and it does honor to his candor that, on having since seen reason to distrust the impression which originally governed him, he now declares from the hustings that the case is doubtful. "I will not give my opinion," says the earl, "as to whether we were right or wrong in the question of the lorcha: it was argued both ways by the most eminent lawyers in both houses of Parliament." Yes ; but being argued, with whatever legal skill, upon a false report of the facts, thus far the whole debate goes for nothing. But Lord Dalkeith adds a sentence (I quote from the "Scotsman's" report) which must have perplexed his hearers and readers : "It was argued," he says, "that, in dealing with a barbarous people like the Chinese, — for, though they are a people learned in mathematics, and in some of the erudite sciences, they yet *are* a barbarous people, — we ought," &c. As to the barbarism, nobody will contradict his lordship *there* ; but as to the mathematics and erudite sciences, this is the first time they were ever heard of ; and I cannot but suppose that the error may be owing to some equivocal phrases in the "Lettres Edifiantes," or other works of that early date. No native Chinese, educated at a native school, ever advanced, I have good reason for believing, to the Fourth Book of "Euclid." When the Roman Catholic Missionaries, about 1640,

and especially the Jesuits, to whom all Europe is so much indebted for the diffusion of education, and, above all, of mathematics (for by Jesuits it was that the "Principia" of the heretic Newton were first popularized by a commentary), the Chinese were in too abject a state to calculate a lunar eclipse, and many times the astronomer-royal was bamboozed in punishment of his miscalculations. But what did these horrid savages want with mathematics? It is perfectly impossible that any *insulated* love of speculative truth can ever arise. One mode of abstract truth leads into another, and collectively they flourish from *reciprocal* support. Mathematics! — how could those men have, who had no navigation, no science of projectiles, no engineering, no land-surveying, no natural philosophy, nor any practical discipline that depends upon mathematics? To determine "*the fortunate hour*"<sup>5</sup> for any inaugural act, *that* was the ultimate object of "science" contemplated in China. Anything more than this was left to the Jesuits. In fact, a lively picture of the temporary light spread by the Jesuits might be drawn from the relations of Prospero to Caliban. The mighty wizard first taught the carnal dog to distinguish the greater and the lesser light — in fact, to understand the cause of day and night. But beyond a certain point he could not go: all teaching was thrown away upon one who could not be taught to *love* knowledge. Caliban, however, was at least made tractable to discipline — he understood the meaning of a kick. But the Chinese Caliban,

“ Abhorred slave,  
That any print of goodness would not take,”

was visited by successions of Prosperos, and persecuted them all whenever the casual caprice that protected them for the hour had burned itself out. Erroneous praise given to such vile burlesques of intellectual humanity forces a man to lodge his protest. Had the Chinese ever been inoculated with any true science, they would have learned to appreciate those who have more. Once let them, in any one pursuit, manifest a sense or a love of anything really intellectual, and we shall then have a hank over them — then first they will rise out of that monkey tribe, capable of mimicry, but of no original creative act, to which they now belong.

Impressed with this general want of knowledge as to China and its habits of feeling, which is due to mere want of study applied to that subject, I have allowed myself to suppose that it might be serviceable to abstract, and to make accessible for the mass of readers, the Parliamentary Blue Books, which are constantly filled with instructive details, but are seldom effectually *published* so as to reach readers not wealthy, nor having much time to seek after works lying out of the ordinary track. As one mode of doing this, I have here reprinted a paper of my own from *TITAN*, which embodies a good deal of circumstantial knowledge originally drawn, in great part, from Blue Books of several years back. To this I have prefixed what will be found a seasonable account of an angry dispute with China in the year

1848, drawn from the ample report made officially to government. At a moment when the subject of China is sure to be universally discussed, no case can possibly present more instructive features; for it was conducted, from first to last, by a man of unrivalled energy and resolution, the Consul Rutherford Alcock; and it serves, in every stage, for a representative picture of the Chinese policy in dealing with foreigners. It has also this separate value, that it rehearses and anticipates, as in a mirror, the main features of our present dispute, some nine years younger, with Yeh and the "*literati*" (as we absurdly call the poisoning knaves) of Canton. Here we find the same insolent disposition to offer insults, the same extravagant obstinacy in refusing all real redress, and the same silly attempt to cheat us with a sham redress. Here, also, we find anticipated the late monstrous doctrine put forward in Parliament — namely, that no retaliatory measures must be undertaken by the delegated officers — consul or plenipotentiary — until the whole case has been submitted to the home government. On such extravagant terms, no outrage, however atrocious, could be redressed; the opportunity would have lapsed; the sense of injury would have faded away, and the sense of justice in the reprisals would be blunted, long before. Lord Dalkeith, indeed, most aristocratically suggests that the disqualification of Sir J. Bowring for instant retaliation arose out of his station: he was not of *rank* sufficient to undertake hostilities. War demanded a baron at the least. If *that* were so, then government had been greatly to blame in not

originally appointing a man of adequate rank to fill the situation. The public service suffers, danger is allowed to ripen, the reparable becomes irreparable, under such a doctrine as this. To what excess would our interests have been damaged in Burmah, in Scinde, in Affghanistan, and many other places, had such a doctrine operated! Let us hear, on this subject, two men of the most appropriate experience.

First, in 1848, on March 31, thus writes Consul Alcock on the supposed propriety of his seeking instructions from Hong-Kong (a thousand miles off) before he was at liberty to move: "Too distant to refer for instructions, I have been compelled, without delay or hesitation, to do all that seemed possible with the means at my disposal. If fear of responsibility had deterred me, I conscientiously believe that, *long before your Excellency's better judgment could have been brought to bear upon the circumstances*, our position would have been materially deteriorated, and *our security would have been seriously endangered.*" And this, he adds, is the opinion also of all the foreigners, of the naval officer on the station, and all other men of any experience.

Secondly, on March 29, 1848, thus write the consular representatives of foreign powers, addressing our admirable British Consul, Mr. Rutherford Alcock: "*Il est certain que si vous eussiez tardé d'un seul jour à exiger et obtenir la punition exemplaire des misérables qui s'étoient rendus coupables, &c., la vie et les propriétés de tous les étrangers étoient sérieusement compromises.*" A single day's delay would, it seems, have been dangerous, *might*



have been ruinous ; and yet people would have life-and-death arrangements to wait for communication between Shanghai and London !

Shanghai, as is well known to those few persons who have made themselves acquainted with our Chinese treaties, is one of the five ports laid open to our commercial shipping — that is, extorted from the terrors of China by our ten thousand expostulating bayonets ; and next after Canton it is the most important. Here we British had, upon the whole, lived very much unmolested ; for a thousand miles, laid between us and the murdering ruffians of Canton, had availed to cleanse the air from the reeking fumes of human shambles. Early, however, in the spring of 1848, six years after our drums and trumpets were heard no more, this happy calm was interrupted by a ferocious outrage, which is of the last importance for reasons of permanent *diplomatic* value. The reader must not understand that, in its immediate features of violence and wantonness, this case transcended many others in or near Canton. On the contrary, by an accident no life was lost on this occasion ; whereas in Canton as many as six of our countrymen have been murdered outright in one and the same minute. But the Shanghai case moved regularly through all the stages of judicial inquest under the most resolute, vigilant and prudent of public officers. The consul at Shanghai, Mr. Rutherford Alcock, fortunately for the interests of justice on this particular occasion,—yet *that* was a trifle by comparison with the interests of our general position in China,—followed up the criminal inquest, hunted

back upon the traces of the ruffians with the energy of some Hebrew avenger of blood.

On Wednesday, the 8th of March, 1848, three British missionaries — Medhurst, Lockhart, and Muirhead — made an excursion into the country from Shanghai, for the purpose of distributing Protestant tracts,— a purpose quite unintelligible to the Celestial intellect. The furthest point of their journey was Tsing-poo, distant about ninety-six *le* [that is, according to the usual valuation,  $\frac{96}{3}$  English miles.]<sup>6</sup> The exact distance became a question of importance, since naturally it must everywhere be desirable for sustaining a complaint against wrong-doers, that the plaintiff should not himself be found trespassing upon any regulation of law. Now, the treaty limited our journeys to a *day's* extent. But on this point there seems to be no room for demur, since the consul (whose authority is here unimpeachable) exonerates the missionaries from having at all exceeded the privileged distance. On leaving Tsing-poo, the missionaries were hustled by a mob — not, perhaps, ill-disposed in any serious extent, but rough and violent. Yet this moderation might be merely politic; for thus far the mob was under the eye of the town and its police. But, on leaving the town, another mob was seen coming after them — apparently, by its angry and menacing gestures, of a more dangerous character. Two of the missionaries, Medhurst and Lockhart, being able to converse fluently in Chinese, thought it best to expostulate with this mob; and, accordingly, to await their coming up.

Any expression of courage was likely to do service, but in this case it failed.

It is not necessary to repeat minutely the circumstances of the outrage. The missionaries were knocked down, trampled on, robbed of their watches and all other personal effects, and then dragged back to Tsing-poo, with the avowed intention of either forcing them severally to pay a ransom of one thousand dollars, or else (which, on the whole, they preferred) of striking off their heads on reaching the other side of the city.

Who were these wretches, thus capable of meditating the last violence against a party of inoffensive strangers, that had come to Tsing-poo on a mission unintelligible, it is true, to *them*, but still wearing on its face a purpose of disinterested kindness? A few words will explain their position with regard to the government, and the danger which attached to their enmity. The tributes of rice, sent to Peking by the southern provinces, had usually been conveyed to Peking by way of the grand canal. This method, as compared with the conveyance by sea, was costly, but had been forced upon the government as the one sole resource in their hands for employing a turbulent body of junk-men. At this crisis, however, an extraordinary shallowness<sup>7</sup> affected the grand canal, and the grain was put on board ships. The boatmen, amounting to thirteen thousand, but by some accounts to twenty thousand, were thus thrown out of employ. How were they to live, or to support their families? The wicked government (which Mr. Roebuck treats as specially paternal) allowed them to understand that

they must live at free quarters, as privileged marauders, upon the surrounding district ; to which district they had accordingly become a terrific abomination.

On March 9, the day immediately following the outrage, the proper steps were taken for obtaining satisfaction by the consul resident at Shanghai. A demand was instantly lodged with the Ta-oo-tae, or sheriff, for the arrest of the persons criminally implicated in the attack, for their trial, for their punishment, and for the restoration of the stolen property. Very soon it became evident that the magistrate had not the remotest intention of attending to any one of these demands. "With a singular inaptitude," says the consul, "he wasted time so precious to *him* in mere subterfuges, and miserable attempts at trick and evasion. And the arrests, which were prevented at first only by his want of will, would soon pass out of his power." Once convinced that nothing was to be hoped for from the voluntary aid of the Ta-oo-tae, the consul sat down to calculate his means of compulsion. These lay chiefly in such coercion or restraint as might be found applicable to a vast fleet of junks "on the eve of departure for Peking, and at that moment lying ready laden in the anchorage above H.M.S. Childers. Of these junks there were more than a thousand. Of all that vast number, not one," said the consul, "shall pass the Childers," until satisfaction shall have been given as to the arrest of the Tsing-poo criminals.

This embargo had been maintained for several days, when the Ta-oo-tae attempted to intimidate the consul by suborning two deputy officers to suggest

the probability of an attack from a Shanghai mob. This suggestion was made by way of letter, and the men asked for a personal interview, at which they would have attempted to enforce their alarms more effectually. But the consul contemptuously refused to see them. "I have," said he, "a wife and family living in the very centre of Shanghai. They and I are at your mercy ; but *that* will not frighten me from my duty."

On March 12, the consul writes to say, "That, up to yesterday evening, three days since the outrage had elapsed without result. All the parties implicated had been seen by hundreds, must be known to the policemen who assisted in the release of the British so cruelly maltreated ; and, finally, that all the junk-men are in the employ of the Chinese government. The consul is bound to inform the Ta-oo-tae that, under these circumstances, any hesitation or any delay amounts to a denial of justice."

On the day following, namely, March 13, the consul writes again : "The ringleaders in the late murderous attack upon British subjects have not yet been seized. It is now, therefore, the consul's duty to inform the chief magistrate, that between nation and nation, in all countries not thoroughly barbarous, it is a recognized law, when an injury is inflicted for which reparation is refused, the nation aggrieved may do *itself* justice, when justice cannot otherwise be obtained." The consul then shows, that for him the dilemma has arisen, either to see the highest inter-

ests of his nation sacrificed by the impunity granted to these criminals ; or ——

And then he states distinctly the other horn of the dilemma in these following terms :

“ If, within forty-eight hours reckoned from noon of this present day, ten of the ringleaders are not in Shanghai for trial and punishment, the consul will, in that case, take other steps to obtain that reparation which the honorable Ta-oo-tae must then be understood solemnly to have refused.”

But was justice to linger through these forty-eight hours ? By no means : provisional steps were to be taken instantly — namely, these two :

First, “ No duties for British ships can be paid over to the custom-house ; ”

Secondly, “ Nor can it be permitted that the grain junks now in the river shall leave the port ; and I trust that you, the honorable Ta-oo-tae, may see the prudence of forbidding them to make the attempt.”

The consul then wisely reminds the magistrate, *whose* doing it is virtually that these resolute measures are adopted ; let *him* — let the dispenser of justice — cease to cherish murderers, and all will return to its natural channels. Indispensable is this continued moral memento ; for else the knave would too surely forget that anybody was accountable for the pressure on the Chinese finances except Her Britannic Majesty's representative.

The consul winds up by these two paragraphs, that must have carried with them the poison of scorpions .

First, with regard to the evasion attempted of late more and more by the Chinese authorities, and which, with their usual silliness, they fancy to be a knockdown blow to the British, such as cannot be parried, — namely, that they, the Chinese, find themselves in a mere inability to control their own mob, and that nobody can justly be summoned to the performance of impossibilities, — the consul simply requests the Ta-oo-tae to observe that in that case the treaty lapses, and becomes so much waste paper. It had then, confessedly, been the crime of the Peking government, in an earlier stage of the intercourse with Britain, to undertake that which, if *now* aware, then and always it must have been aware, of inability to perform. If this inability is not to be regarded as a sharper's trick, then the British reënter upon those rights of self-indemnification which, upon mendacious pretences, they had consented to withdraw ; and the Chinese reënter upon those evils from which, under a fraudulent representation, we consented to deliver them. Nothing was exacted from Peking except the withdrawal of patronage from murder.

The closing paragraph, ominous in Chinese ears as the bell of St. Sepulchre in past times to the poor Newgate convict, ran thus : “ I entreat you, whilst it is yet time, to put an end to this untoward state of affairs BY PRODUCING THE CRIMINALS ; ” [there lay the sum of our demand ;] “ but, if this be not done, it remains for me to announce my determination to redress the injury inflicted.” The consul then

announces the arrival of H.M.S. Childers, and the immediate approach of her comrade, the *Espiégle*.

“ And should further insult, molestation, or injury be offered to British subjects, I will summon every British ship within reach to the anchorage ; and the consequences will rest on your Excellency’s head, whose acts will have been the cause of all that may follow.”

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Let us pause a moment to review the case so far as it has even yet travelled. I have noticed in another part of this pamphlet the inhuman obstinacy of the Chinese, quite unparalleled in human annals, agreeably to which experience it is a common remark of Europeans in China, that no good ever comes of reasoning with a Chinaman ; for what he says at first, though by mere accident, *that* he fancies it a point of nobility to insist on at the last. But at what price ? Let this be judged by the present case. This dog, now playing his antics before us in a style to make the angels weep, is pretending to think it a meritorious distinction in his public history, that he has screened, and will continue to screen, from justice a gang of bloody criminals. Why ? On what allegation ? Allow him even the benefit of what is essential to the comfort of a Chinese, namely, falsehood, upon what mendacious pretence does he build his patronage of these thieves ? Is it that he takes some separate and eccentric view of their murderous acts ? Is it as a hair-splitting casuist that he comes forward ? Not at all ; he admits the very worst of what is alleged against them by ourselves. Is it



then simply that he shrinks from the *trouble* that may chance to be connected with the arrest of the accused ? But as yet he has not made an attempt to arrest them ; and already, even at this early stage of the case, it has become evident enough that trouble incalculably greater will attend the refusal to arrest. Is it then that he has been bribed by, or on behalf of, the wrong-doers ? Neither case is possible. There is nobody who takes any interest in the ruffians ; and they, individually, are paupers. The sole reason which governs the Ta-oo-tae is derived from the impulse of demoniac obstinacy. From the first he had sworn to himself that the consul should not obtain his demand. And, in fact, it will *not* be obtained through this officer, though it is daily becoming clearer that it will be obtained in spite of this officer, to the signal injury of this officer, and (unless he should have the fiend's luck as well as his own), probably, to his ruin. Yet all this plain summons of common sense is overthrown by the single impulse of Chinese currish restiveness.

Considered as a morbid phenomenon in the history of human nature, the case [that is, not the individual case, but the Chinese case generally] is interesting ; and it is worth while arraying before the reader that series of mortifications which had *already* followed out of the Ta-oo-tae's obstinacy, and was likely every week to thicken its gloomy shadows :

First, he had been baffled — and, which was still more mortifying, he had been *exposed* as a baffled agent — in a little intrigue for undermining the official rights and dignity of the consul, Rutherford

Alcock. The Ta-oo-tae had written privately to Mr. Medhurst, with a view to some secret hole-and-corner settlement of the case, such as might evade the call for the criminals, and supersede, as a *res judicata*, the official interference of the consul. With summary decision, the consul showed him that his manœuvres were known to him, and were too frivolous (as being founded in total ignorance of international diplomacy) to cause him any serious concern.

Secondly, he had hoped that this refusal of the Tsing-poo delinquents would operate most prejudicially to the British interests, in so far as they depended upon public opinion. And this result really *would* have followed, but for the powerful counter-action effected by the consul. He was fully aware of the intense interest in this affair taken by the whole population between Shanghai and Tsing-poo. The Chinese in this province, previously perplexed in extremity by the counter indications of British character, had been impressed profoundly by reports to the disadvantage of our power and credit from Canton; they were generally in a state of suspense upon the true tendencies of our influence and weight with the supreme government; and this contest with the local government, tending (as apparently it did) to an open rupture, was naturally watched by the whole population over an area<sup>s</sup> of a thousand square miles (that is, over all the interjacent country connecting Shanghai and Tsing-poo, and round each of these neighboring cities as a centre). But this vigilant interest was trained into currents favorable

to the British name by placards (in the Chinese language for the native population, in the English language for the European population), emanating from the judicious pen of the consul. These placards were, in one special feature, most skilfully framed — that so far from arrogantly or ostentatiously arraying before their readers the vast British resources, on the contrary, they sought to apologize for the painful necessity of employing them. Nevertheless, in the very act of thus apologizing, unavoidably they rehearsed and marshalled those terrors which they deprecated. How painful to summon this eighty-four-gun ship! How disagreeable to call up that dreadful Nemesis steamer, which revives so many angry memorials! Yet *in deprecating he records them.*

It was not that the consul really felt the confidence, or not *all* the confidence, which patriotically he simulated. But he knew that it would be ruinous to *manifest* any fears; upon the least encouragement in that way a Chinese populace becomes unmanageable, for the Chinese is a natural *connoisseur* in cowardice; by sympathetic instinct he understands and appreciates every movement of fear. The consul, therefore, suffered the ladies of his family to traverse the city every day at high noon, and in every direction, not hiding from himself or *them*, meantime, that upon any hostile demonstration from the mob of Shanghai, he and they were lost; for their dwelling was in the very centre of the city, from which no escape was possible. Let the reader, meantime, in estimating this attempt to work upon

the consul's fears for his family, transfer the situation in his imagination to London, and figure to himself our own sheriffs of London and Middlesex, under instructions from the Foreign Office, and from the Privy Council, striving to terrify a Chinese envoy from his duty, by suggesting dangerous mobs.

This dodge having failed, the Ta-oo-tae (whom for sake of brevity, permit me henceforward to call<sup>o</sup> by the well-known name of Mr. Toots) tried another. He had pledged his word at ten A.M., that in return for notorious forbearances on the part of the consul, he would himself abstain from all underhand intrigues with the rice-junks. At eleven A.M. on the same day he issued secret orders that these junks should drop down, and try to slip out by threes and fours, hoping thus to distract the little Childers. This *ruse*, also, having failed, next he practised others more and more childish. He caused, for instance, bricks to be piled elaborately above the rice. But Jack, on board the Childers, found prime larking in watching and baffling all these wiles. The little Childers proved herself "a brick" in maintaining the consul's embargo; and upon the whole it was certain that the merest trifle, if any at all, of the rice had slipped through.

An interdict having simultaneously been put upon the payment of the usual British dues to the custom-house, those who sat at the receipt of custom began to hold a sinecure office. Fine holiday times there were now in Shanghai, which made the Chinese Mr. Toots very popular at that port; but, on the other hand, at Peking, and all around the Imperial Exchequer, which showed all the symptoms of gal-

lopping consumption, he would have been cursed by bell, book, and candle, had it been known distinctly *who* caused the stoppage. Toots, therefore, fancied that he would try his hand at a new swindle, which could cost him only two dollars and a lie. So, one fine morning, he said to the consul, What is it you want?—*Cons.* What is it? Why, I should think you knew pretty well by this time: what I want is, the Tsing-poo knaves.—*Toots.* Well, I've got 'em.—*Cons.* How many?—*Toots.* Two; but, as they were the ringleaders, *that* ought to do.—*Cons.* No. It's too little, by eight. However, as a payment to account, I'll take it. We'll call it a first instalment. But let's have a look at the men; are you sure they are genuine?—*Toots.* O, quite.—*Cons.* Well, I'll send for the missionaries. These, on arriving, were introduced, together with the consul, to the supposed ruffians; but the whole pretence was instantaneously detected as a hoax. Neither of the men could be recognized by any of the missionaries; and, by an ingenious artifice of the consul, they were conclusively exposed as swindlers. Concerting his plan with the missionaries, the consul challenged both the knaves to answer him this question,—one most rememberable incident in the course of the outrage,—Had it happened at the east (otherwise the Shanghai) gate, or at the north gate? After an embarrassed pause, both men said, *At the north gate.* Now, in fact, it had happened at neither, but in the very centre of the town, two miles removed from *any* gate. This dodge, therefore, would not work, any more than the brick-masked rice. The

two scoundrels were exploded from the stage with peals of laughter,<sup>10</sup> whilst Mr. Toots walked off *re infecta*, saying, *It's of no consequence, not of the very least consequence, not the slightest in the world.*

But nobody could say *that* of the next move in the game. The consul had by this time become weary of the fool's play, which, because it was childish and girlish beyond all belief to European minds, was not on that account the less knavish or the less dangerous. He was therefore now prepared to play his last and capital card. Neither the *rice* embargo nor the *customs'* interdict was of a nature to be long continued—the pressure, growing every hour more severe, would have found a vent in riots, such as neither prudence nor conscience, on our British side, was likely to contemplate steadfastly. The last resource, therefore, in a case where the subordinate magistrates showed no signs of yielding, must be an armed appeal to the higher. This was tried: it was tried instantly; instantly it met with the amplest acquiescence; instantly satisfaction was awarded on each several article of our complaint; and to all appearance (though such appearances are hard to spell in trick-trick-tricking China) the celestial pig-tail curled up wrathfully against Mr. Toots, and frowns mantled on the celestial countenance, though Mr. Toots persisted in saying that it was of no consequence—not the least; no, I assure you, not of the slightest conceivable consequence. The arch little gypsy, the saucy Espiégle, thought otherwise. She and Mr. Toots differed in opinion. For she it was that worked the whole revolution; she it was

that carried a certain letter from the consul, and also the consul's compliments, into the great river Yang-tse-Keang; and from pure forgetfulness (which I can allow for, being myself subject to frequent absence of mind), she carried at the same time her whole armament of guns. This little ship, finding herself in this huge river, danced a few cotillons up and down; but, at last, night coming on, she settled down to business; ran up to Nanking; asked if the viceroy lived there; and, finding he did, Jack handed in his papers, saying that the viceroy would find *a writ* inside for himself. It is inconceivable what a fright and what a *termashaw* were caused by this little *Espiégle*. For hundreds of miles on both banks of the river were seen men peering into honeycombed guns, like magpies into a marrow-bone, cleaning muskets, sharpening swords, drying damp gunpowder. Some reason there was for all this alarm, since the *Espiégle* had her guns with her; she showed her teeth; and the last time that the "Son of the Ocean"<sup>11</sup> or any of his children could have seen such teeth had been sixteen years ago: at which date results had followed never to be forgotten by China; for, beyond all doubt, the great social swell, the restlessness, and the billowy state of insurrectionary uproars, that have agitated China ever since their war with us, owe their origin to that war. They trace not only their *time* origin, but their *causal* origin to that war. That war pierced as with Ithuriel's spear the great bloated carcass of China, and what followed? The old Miltonic Ithuriel dislodged the mighty form of a leading warrior angel from what

had seemed to be a bloated toad ; but Great Britain, the Ithuriel of 1842, simply reversed this process ; and that which, under old traditional superstitions, had masqueraded as a warrior angel, collapsed, at one touch of the mighty spear, into a bloated toad. The blindness of China prompted him to come (and needlessly to come) into collision with a power the mightiest upon earth ; or, under any estimate, mightiest of those that speak from a double centre of land and sea. The title of leader among terra-queous potentates, no rival (however jealous) will refuse to Great Britain ; and exactly such a power it was that China should have shunned : because the great nations that are strong only in armies cannot, from the cost and other causes, transfer one-fortieth part of their forces to regions so remote as China. Even St. Petersburg is above six thousand miles distant (and therefore Moscow not five hundred miles less) from the very nearest (that is, the northernmost) of the Chinese capitals — namely, Peking ; consequently much more from the southern capitals of China ; and, meantime, all the populous and most available part of Russia is divided from China by vast (often fountainless) deserts, and by vast (often pathless) steppes. No potentate, therefore, on whom the sun looks down was more to be feared by China as her *evil genius* than Great Britain : none ever showed so much forbearance ; none so much forgot her own majesty in desire to conciliate this brutal megatherium. Yet upon folly that is doomed all advantages are thrown away. And Britain — that asked nothing from China, but, 1, not to



swindle by means of a Commissioner Lin; 2, not to patronize murder; 3, to keep a better tongue in her head—could not obtain these most reasonable demands in return for vast commercial benefits. At length that Britain, which China so insolently rejected as a friend, was made the instrument of her chastisement. Not meaning to do more than to repress her insolence, which at length had become an active and contagious nuisance, we probed and exposed her military weakness to an extent that is now irrevocable. Seeking only to defend our own interests, unavoidably we laid bare to the whole world, and therefore to her own mutinous children, the condition of helpless wreck in which China had long been lying prostrate. *The great secret* (whispered no doubt in Asia for some generations) *was broadly exposed*. As some parliamentary candidate rightly expressed it, China is now in a general state of disintegration—rotten in one part, she is hollow in another. On this quarter you detect cancer; on that quarter you find nothing on which cancer could prey. Neither is there any principle of self-restoration. Vital stamina there are none; and amongst the children of the state, cruel subjects of a cruel and wicked government, it is vain to count upon any filial tenderness or reverential mercy towards their dying mother. Mercy there is (to use Shakspeare's language) about "as much as there is milk in a male tiger;" and as to *principles* that might do the work of alienated affections, who has ever witnessed such springs of action amongst the Chinese? Gone, therefore—burned out—in China, is any one prin-

ciple of cohesion to which you can look for the restoration of a government. Since *our* war, there has been no general government — none but a local and fractured one : and what has disguised, or partially masked, this state of anarchy, is simply the vast extent of China ; secondly, the comatose condition of what are called the *literati* ; and thirdly, the discontinuous currency of all public movements, from the want of any real Press ; and the want of any such patriotic interests as could ever create a Press.

We therefore having been the organs by which this fatal revolution was effected in China, and our triumph in 1842 having been sealed by the martial events that occurred in the Yang-tse-Keang, naturally enough our reappearance upon that stage awakened memories and fears accounting for a great body of agitation. A generation partly new was growing up, that had heard of us, and read of us, as terrific water-monsters, sharks, or crocodiles, but many of whom had not seen us. In those circumstances, naturally, the rush was great to see our jolly tars of the *Espiégles* ; and disappointed were many that our heads did not grow beneath our shoulders. The presents, and *gages d'amitié*, which we received from the mob, were painfully monotonous — too generally assuming the shape of paving-stones. However, it was pleasant to find that in the distribution of these favors their own countrymen, the mandarins, went along with us — share and share alike : indeed, some thought *they* got seven to our six, which was inhospitable. Such was our reception from the mob ; but from the viceroy, and what elsewhere we

call the *literati*, distinguished was our welcome, and oily the courtesies at our service.

But the great result of the trip to Nanking was, that we gained all the objects contemplated by the consul in a degree, and with a facility, that no man could have counted on ; so that no act of vigor ever perhaps so fully justified itself by the results as did this of the consul. The fact was, they were all alarmed at our presence. Vainly we spoke words of friendship and assurance. The emperor himself was not very far off, and was agitated by the visit of the little *Espiégle* ; which the crew could not understand, saying, “ Bless your heart, the little pet wouldn’t harm a fly ; she’s as quiet as a lamb.” She might be so, but the *literati* were all anxious that the lamb should seek her pastures in some other river. This uneasiness was our greatest auxiliary : aided by this, we obtained almost instant despatch ; and, that the lamb might have no pretence for coming back to attack the wolves, everything asked for was conceded. Had we asked for Toots’ head, we should probably have got it.

Within three days, those ten ringleaders, whom Toots had found it so dire an impossibility to produce for trial, were paraded with the cangue (or portable pillory) about their necks in the centre of Shanghai ; and subsequently provided with chambers suited to their various walks of study, in select dungeons. The thousand junks, in number, roominess, and elegance of accommodation, probably well representing the thousand “ black ships ” that followed Admiral Agamemnon to the Troad, were all

in one minute suffered to unmoor by the little Childers, whose wrath exhaled as suddenly as that of Diana at Aulis. Consequently rice was suddenly "looking down" to a horrible extent in Peking. The customs, which had seemed frozen up, now thawed freely into the celestial breeches-pocket, though sadly intercepted by ravenous mandarins on the way. Concerning all which, though everybody else was pleased, Toots remarked that it was n't of much consequence; in fact, speaking confidentially, was n't of *any*, not the least in the world, of no consequence whatever. So terminated, in such triumphant style, and with reparation so ample, this affair of Shanghai, which, left to itself, or confided to any other hands than those of Rutherford Alcock, naturally and rapidly tended to a new war. That tendency it was which so much alarmed the viceroy. Of all diplomatists, this masterly Rutherford Alcock is least open to the charge of having operated by means of war; since, of all men in China, he happens to be the one who prospered exclusively by preventing a war. An anonymous writer in the "Scotsman" of April 7 (having, however, no sanction<sup>12</sup> whatever to plead from the *Editor* of the "Scotsman"), is most bitter in his reflections on Consul Alcock; so bitter, that all readers will suspect a personal feud as underlying such intemperate language. This I will not repeat; but will content myself with summing up, as a suitable close to the Shanghai narrative. Nine years have now passed since the drama (at one time looking very like a tragedy) closed in a joyous and triumphant

catastrophe. There was an *anagnorisis* (*αναγνωσις*) just such as the Stagirite approves: the Tsing-poo ruffians were all recognized and identified to the satisfaction of a crowded audience by the three missionaries; they were punished to the extent of what the Chinese law allows, except that death (which that law awards in the case of robbery) was remitted with the cordial assent of the injured parties. And, finally, the consul, who may be regarded as the hero of this drama, was crowned with universal praise, and by none more than his official superiors, Sir George Bonham and Lord Palmerston, who had blamed or doubted his policy at first, but had now the candor to allow that its headlong boldness had constituted its main ground of success.

Meantime, no dealing of ours with men born in China could ever pass without a characteristic kick from some Chinese hoof. In this particular case, indeed, all things told so ill for the flowery people, whether gentle or simple, master or man, that the whole might have been expected for once to pass in solemn silence. But this was not to be. The viceroy had been too thoroughly frightened by Her Majesty's brig *Espiégle*, not to take out his vengeance in a private letter [marked *confidential*] to the Emperor. How this letter transpired, is no business of mine: it *did*; and well it exemplifies the scoundrelism of the Chinese nature in high quarters equally as in lowest.

The viceroy describes the Tsing-poo robbery and meditated murder as a brawl between the missionaries and some boatmen, leaving it to be collected

that all the parties were perhaps drunk together, and got to what in Westmoreland is called *scraffling*. And next he insinuates that the wounds of the missionaries were mere romances for coloring the pecuniary claim.<sup>13</sup> It is probable that few of us who read this chapter of Chinese spoliation altogether go along with these missionaries in their proselytizing views upon a people so unspiritual as our brutal friends the Chinese. But we all know the self-denying character of missionaries as a class, who risk their lives in lands such as China. Poor Mr. Medhurst did not live to recover the blessings of English society; for he died immediately after landing in England: but his book speaks for itself. He is wrong, in my opinion, upon various Chinese questions, as particularly in his elaborate chapters upon the probable population of China; and he too much palliates the Chinese follies, when he apologizes for our own English faith in Francis Moore. Only the lowest of the low in England ever *do* make profession of believing in Moore. Whilst buying his almanac, which (in the common pirated editions of Belfast) was cheap, and met the ordinary purposes of an almanac, the rustic purchaser generally laughed. But, whether wrong or right in trifles, Medhurst was a most generous and a pious man; and the affair at Tsing-poo shows him to have been as brave a man as ever existed; for all the accounts show that, when Mr. Lockhart, by dropping behind, had fallen into great peril, Mr. Medhurst did not hesitate an instant in turning back and meeting an infuriated mob for the purpose of aiding his friend.

But now, dismissing the past, let us come to our immediate British prospects in China. Gloomy, indeed, are these; and it might seem greatly to lighten this burden, if I should say (which with great truth I *can* say) that we owe our difficulties to our own deplorable want of energy; and, by one act of resolution, might effect an instantaneous conquest of the two great obstacles to such a settlement as, under the social disorganization of China, can now be had. What two obstacles are those which I speak of? They are — the emperor: the most stolid of all known princes, and by force of very impotence an obstructive power; secondly, the city of Canton. I will take this last-mentioned nuisance first. Mr. Roebuck puts forward five separate ministers as having urged upon us the policy of forbearing to press our treaty-rights with regard to Canton. One only of the five is really answerable for such counsels — namely, Lord Aberdeen. He held very dangerous and unpatriotic language. The other four may be well represented by Lord Palmerston, whose real language was this: he advised us to keep up our right of free entrance into this city; separately for itself he thought the right of real importance; and also distinctly so, as a treaty concession to us. What he said in the other direction amounted simply to this: that no harm would perhaps arise from consenting to suspend our claim during a period of refractoriness in the Canton mob. More than this Lord Palmerston could not consistently have said, since he had himself counselled earnestly that the claim should never be

dropped, or even intermitted, but only withdrawn to the rear for a short period.

But now, listen, reader, to the arguments upon which it is, past all doubting, that the noble viscount would *at present* hold an altered tone. When he counselled delay, he did so under the impression (as openly he avowed) that no immediate benefit was lost through such a momentary suspension of the claim. But now, first of all, as regards both America and ourselves, there have arisen special and intolerable grievances, from the want of building ground in the interior of Canton. The United States agents are complaining more and more upon this head. But what is *that* by comparison with the moral effect from the growing diffusion over all China of our exclusion for the express purpose of degrading us?

I have reported circumstantially the behavior of the Chinese magistracy, ordinary and extraordinary, on occasion of the Tsing-poo outrage, in order that it may be seen what sort of new treaties we need for the security of our British brethren in China. Had Mr. Consul Alcock failed in his last measure, the lives and property of all our countrymen at Shanghai would not have been worth a year's purchase. Now, lastly, knowing what is wanted, let it be inquired what prospect there is of obtaining it in face of the existing obstacles. What obstacles? Those to which I have already mentioned — the wicked city of Canton, and the wicked emperor; both wicked, both wholesale dealers in murder, but, unfortunately, both stolid and ignorant in an excess,



which makes them unmanageable, except by war, or by menaces of war.

I will begin with the first obstacle, — namely, Canton, — which, without a personal experience of the evil, is hardly appreciable.

To tolerate a notorious and systematic degradation to any body of men, cannot be wise anywhere, but least of all in a nation so ignorant as the Chinese, having no historic knowledge by which to correct any false impressions derived from accident. Crowds of men from Canton flock incessantly to Amoy and Shanghai, where they diffuse the most degrading opinions of the British, and, to some extent, confirm them by the undeniable fact of our stern exclusion from their city.<sup>14</sup>

Secondly, amongst a people that cannot be thought to have reached a higher stage of intellectual development than that which corresponds to childhood, it is not prudent to suffer any one article of a treaty to be habitually broken. Such infractions are contagious ; the knavish counsellors of the emperor, finding that we submit coolly to one infraction, that aims at nothing confessedly beyond a bitter insult to us, this only, and no dream of any further advantage being proposed, are tempted into trying another infraction, and so onwards. For fourteen years we have allowed ourselves to tolerate this burning scandal ; and all the while the successive governors of Canton have been amusing us with moonshine visions that “ *the time may come* ” when they can think of fulfilling their engagements.<sup>15</sup> Canton, therefore, has two values — first, on its own account, separately ;

secondly, on account of its relation to the treaty. Upon this latter point I have spoken. But, as to the other, it is not possible to find words strong enough for the occasion. Mr. Consul Alcock, when reviewing the circumstances which, on the one side, constitute, or which, on the other, tend to control, the danger attaching to the British position in China, where a little household, counted by hundreds, is scattered amongst hostile millions, thus brings the weight of his official experience to bear upon the question. He is speaking at the moment of Shanghai; but what he says applies to any and every English station alike: "Our position is so deeply compromised, and our security from molestation so slight, that Shanghai *will be no better than Canton in an incredibly short period.*"

But what, then, was it that *caused* this gradual assimilation of a port, previously reputed safe, to that one which had always been a city of violence and danger? Simply the example (published over all China) of Canton. The example of itself kindled evil thoughts, without, however, concealing the accompanying dangers of public chastisement or of private retaliation. But the record of its impunity whispered to the malignity of all China, encouraging thoughts of a possible gratification, liberated from the pursuing Nemesis. What this experienced consul thought upon the subject, even Lord Palmerston, in the midst of his overwhelming labors, may find time to read. It is this: "Too many incidental circumstances have been generally observed in the demeanor and acts of the people and authorities,

since the last catastrophe of Canton, for those who have them daily under their eyes, to avoid the conviction that our position *at that port* has exercised a most prejudicial influence upon the minds of both people and authorities. I have long been fully convinced, from the result of my observations at all the three ports where I have resided, *that Canton, and our relations there, have the most serious effect upon our position at all the other ports, and our standing (with the authorities, at least) throughout the empire.*"<sup>16</sup>

We need a solid arrangement for securing both the safety and the *respectability* of the British ; for at present we hold equally the unsafe position, and the degraded position, of Jews in the middle ages. Strange it seems that at this day any man should have it in his power to expose a new feature in the administration of the Chinese government ; and yet, apparently, it was never noticed by either of our two ambassadors ; most certainly it never entered practically into any chapter of their remedial provisions, that a mysterious darkness surrounds the emperor, fatal to ourselves. In Affghanistan we found ourselves in this hopeless embarrassment, that no organ existed in the state with which it was possible to form a treaty. He that for the moment had power was the man that could locally give effect to a treaty, but only for his own district ; and even there, possibly, only for a few weeks. This terrible defect proclaimed ruin to any party whose hopes lay in negotiating. Now, a similar defect exists in China. The emperor, for most purposes, is a cipher, and cannot give effect to his own wishes, though occasionally they seem

just. In 1836, and on some other occasions, he issued an edict, evidently founded on his own dim suspicions that the authorities at Canton were misleading him, and perhaps were themselves causing the turbulent movements which they charged upon the English, by their own attempts to pillage these foreigners. It is plain, from what transpires at long intervals, that an indistinct glimmering of the truth reaches him at times. But too generally no truth ever penetrates to the imperial cabinet.<sup>17</sup>

It is therefore our sad necessity in China, as things stand at present, that we cannot in any satisfactory or binding sense negotiate. In order to figure adequately our embarrassment in this respect, we have only to remember that the particular perplexity which ruined a detachment of our army at Cabul, and cost us four thousand Sepoys, together with nearly five hundred British infantry, — namely, the absence of any *representative* authority capable of guaranteeing the execution of a treaty, — exists virtually in China, under a far less remediable form. It is a misery attaching to all barbarous lands that are under no control from the fraternal responsibilities acknowledged by nations under a system of international law. But the evil which at Cabul oppressed us for a few weeks, in China exists forever. Nor will it be at all mitigated until the present convulsions, consequent upon our sharp handling of China in 1842, have accomplished their secret mission of disorganizing the hulk, which must be shattered into fragments before it can be usefully recast.

*An American merchant* (so he describes himself on

the title-page) wrote a pamphlet on British relations with China in 1834. As a neutral observer, he obtained some attention in England, and one remark of his deserves to be quoted ; it is this : “ We have seen that the Emperor of China *cannot* be approached by embassies.”<sup>18</sup> This is true ; he *cannot*, and he *will not*. In reality, though conspiracies against the person of the emperor are unaccountably rare, it is probable that, if he did not receive ambassadors brutally and superciliously, — if he consented to regard them as representing potentates standing on an equality with himself,— he would not reign very long. On the pretence that he had degraded the nation, the next heir would be raised to the throne.

An amusing instance of this inflexible arrogance occurred during Lord Amherst's embassy in 1816. The letter from our Regent, of which Lord Amherst was the bearer, began in the form usual amongst sovereign princes — “ Sir, my Brother ; ” but the great mandarins, who most impertinently opened the letter, protested that they could not present such a letter without risk of decapitation. This and a thousand similar anecdotes show us that we cannot send an embassy in the ordinary form, without a gratuitous sacrifice of our own dignity, where there is no prospect of advantage. How, then, does our government propose to proceed ? I will briefly array before the reader the only three modes of action which lie within our choice. Under any one of the three it is to be presumed that we shall open the drama by taking military possession of Canton. Toward this object, it is fortunate that partial reinforcements from the

Persian Gulf and India will have enabled the present commanders to have made some considerable martial advances before any trader in "*moderation*" and pacific measures, which have so continually proved ruinous when operating upon oriental tempers, can have arrived to prejudge the question. Any man who tries the effect of opposite measures will find his surest punishment in general defeat, and in the necessity of soon abruptly changing his policy. After the occupation of Canton, and the summary expulsion of Yeh, whose degradation and signal punishment it is to be hoped will be instantly demanded from the emperor, we might proceed with a fleet of steam-frigates, and smaller craft, to the mouth of the river Peiho, from which the distance is but small to Peking. Steam transports will carry *some* land forces; *how many* will depend upon the particular scheme of tactics, one out of three, which our government may elect for its policy.

First, although it is true, in the words of the American merchant, that the Emperor of China cannot be approached by embassies, — understanding by that term pacific and ceremonial agents prepared to discuss and to arrange international concerns, — *that* is no reason for his declining to receive an armed embassy. Our naval force at the mouth of the Peiho will need in that case to be strengthened; and we shall carry in the transports perhaps seven thousand picked land troops. With these we shall probably occupy Peking; in which case the emperor would be found to have fled to his Tartar hunting-seat. From him personally we should gain nothing. But

his flight would by itself publish his defeat, and go far to stamp a character of emptiness upon all his subsequent gasconades. He could, however, as little be dispensed with for any continued period, as the queen-bee from a hive. To stay away, would be to interrupt the whole currency of the national administration. Yet, sometimes, it will be alleged, he *does* stay away for six or eight weeks, doing what he conceives to be "hunting;" for the Russian *charge d'affaires* had the honor to behold his majesty, when belted with fourteen thousand men, bravely fire his rifle at a tiger. But in these hunting expeditions, it must be remembered, the intercourse with Peking was kept open by couriers continually on the road; whereas, under our occupation of the capital, the only available road would be interdicted by a British military post at the Wall, through which lies, of necessity, the sole avenue of communication with Mantchoo Tartary. An emperor who was so effectually frightened by the little saucy Espiègle would be brought upon his knees, and himself "knock head," at the summons of such an expedition as this.

But this policy requires money and energy, more, I fear, than we are yet prepared to spend upon our Chinese interest, until a great massacre of our British brethren at Amoy or Shanghai shall have abolished forever all policies suggested by the sons of the feeble.

Secondly, the next policy is that which works by bribery. This method, in times when the East India Company domineered over the China trade, was

employed largely, but unfortunately under Chinese compulsion, so that it availed us only in a negative way — that is, we were not kicked out of China ; but had no *positive* returns for our one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Little gratitude or service was conceived to be due for money given protestingly, and under the screw. Here was the very gall and wormwood of robbery — that nothing was earned apparently by submitting to it. But the Chinese robber thought otherwise, and parried our complaints in the spirit of *Æsop's* wolf, when replying to the crane's complaint that she had received no fee for her surgical service in extracting a bone from his throat : “ How ? No fee ? Do you count it none to have withdrawn that long bill of yours in safety from my mouth ? ” The pretence was, that a toleration of this commerce had been purchased at court by bribes judiciously planted. Mr. Matheson (of the Canton firm, Jardine & Matheson) showed, in a very valuable pamphlet, published in 1836, that the whole sum distributed amongst the emperor's mother, and a quadrille of other old ladies, &c., amounted annually to one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Think, therefore, arithmetical reader, what sad hypocrisy it was in the imperial court, that reaped so largely where it had not sown, to talk in its grandiloquent strain about the infinite pettiness of this commerce in celestial eyes. No single person's family in China, where all splendor is an unknown thing, and the imperial gifts are seldom worth separately as much as three half-crowns, could spend so much as three thousand pounds a year. Such a sum, there-



fore, as one hundred and fifty thousand pounds per annum must mine its way through the court ranks like so many miners' blastings; and, if it has been discontinued since the war, there is no need to wonder that Yehs, and such cattle, are employed. Little doubt but Yeh was sent as a mischief-maker, to remind us, by rough practice, of the need we stand in of a protector at Peking.

This bribery system, however, as shown by Mr. Matheson in his excellent pamphlet of 1836, has always ruinously recoiled upon our own interests. In one chief instance,<sup>19</sup> the Canton knaves who pocketed the bribes actually employed those very bribes — how? Let the reader guess. Actually in purchasing at Peking, by re-bribery, the license to coerce and limit our commerce in modes never before attempted.

Finally, there is a third course — namely, again to attempt a *pacific* embassy, such as Lord Macartney's and Lord Amherst's; but — and prudence even on his own behalf will *now* speak loudly to any man undertaking such an embassy — with great modifications. The two lords of past times had this excuse: they did not know the government to which they were accredited, as we of this generation know them; and the British government, ignorant, even as these lords were ignorant, upon the true condition of China, sent them out most inadequately furnished and instructed for the mission before them. In this miserable perplexity, it should never be forgotten, to their praise, that both resisted the killing degradation of the *ko-tou*; and Lord Amherst, in particular, dealing

with a more savage emperor, under a sense of personal danger. If this plea may palliate their conduct for having submitted to be carted about like commercial bales, and at first to be conveyed in junks, bearing banners, inscribed "*The English tribute-bearers*," we must have no more of such passive acquiescences in studied insults offered to our national honor. Sir G. Staunton<sup>20</sup> attempts to palliate this compliance on the ground that Lords Macartney and Amherst stood firm upon greater questions. There is none greater. It is through these unthinking concessions that we are now reduced to miserable straits. Most truly does Mr. Matheson say (pp. 8, 9), "It is humiliating to reflect that our present degradations in the eyes of China are *self-imposed*."

'The thorns which we have reaped are of the tree  
We planted ; they have torn us, and we bleed.' "

The Memorials addressed to government in the year 1836, first by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, soon after by the Glasgow East India Association, next by the Liverpool East India Association, all speak the same determined language ; strictly applicable to this time. But I quote by preference from the "Canton Memorial." This excellent paper, after insisting indignantly upon the brutal Chinese treatment of Lord Napier,<sup>21</sup> which persecuted him into a condition of misery that terminated in his death, and urging that ample reparation should be exacted for this outrage, and also "for the arrogant and degrading language used towards your Majesty, and our country, in edicts of the local authorities,

wherein your Majesty was represented as the '*reverently submissive tributary* of the Emperor of China,' and your Majesty's subjects as *profligate barbarians*," goes on to suggest that with a small naval force — namely, one ship of the line, two frigates, and four armed vessels of light draught, together with a steam vessel, all fully manned — there would be found no difficulty in putting a stop to the greater part of the external and internal commerce of the Chinese Empire, of intercepting its revenues in their progress to the capital, and in taking possession of all the armed vessels of the country. And such measures, so far from being likely to lead to a more serious collision, would be the surest course for avoiding it.

The Memorial then goes on to this wise counsel: "We would further urgently submit, that, as we cannot but trace the disabilities under which our commerce labors, to a long acquiescence in the arrogant assumption of supremacy over the monarchs and people of other countries, claimed by the Emperor of China for himself and his subjects, we are forced to conclude that *no beneficial result can be expected to arise from negotiations in which such pretensions are not decidedly repelled*." Finally, I will quote a passage more closely and ominously applicable to any inconsiderate undertaker of this arduous office:

"We would therefore beseech your Majesty not to leave it to the discretion of any future representative of your Majesty, as *was* permitted in the case of Lord Amherst, to swerve in the smallest degree from a calm and dispassionate, but determined, maintenance of the true rank of your Majesty's empire in the scale of nations."

And the Memorial concludes with this emphatic sentence, just as wise now as it was then: Our counsel is, "not to permit any future commissioner to set his foot on the shores of China, until ample assurance is afforded of a reception and treatment suitable to the dignity of a minister of your Majesty, and to the honor of an empire that acknowledges no superior on earth."

Who is to go out as our ambassador has not, I believe, as yet been officially made known. But whoever he may be, it is pretty certain that he will fail. Were there no other reason for saying so, how is the following dilemma to be met? A man of rank must be appointed, or the Chinese emperor will hold himself affronted. Yet, on the other hand, all the Englishmen who speak Chinese are *not* men of rank, but are either supercargoes (some actually serving as such, some *emeriti*), or else missionaries. There is no time to learn Chinese; and interpreters are perfectly useless, except on a mere mission of ceremony. How is that *fix* to be treated? Œdipus and the Sphinx combined could not solve it.

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## CHINA.

In the days of Grecian Paganism, when morals (whether social or domestic) had no connection whatever with the National Religion, it followed that there could be no organ corresponding to our modern PULPIT (Christian or Mahometan) for teaching and illustrating the principles of morality. Those principles, it was supposed, taught and explained them-

selves. Every man's understanding, heart, and conscience, furnished him surely with light enough for his guidance on a path so plain, within a field so limited, as the daily life of a citizen — Spartan, Theban, or Athenian. In reality, this field was even more limited than at first sight appeared. Suppose the case of a Jew, living in pre-Christian Judea, under the legal code of Deuteronomy and Leviticus — or suppose a Mussulman at this day, living under the control of Mahometan laws, he finds himself left to his own moral discretion hardly in one action out of fifty; so thoroughly has the municipal law of his country (the *Pentateuch* in the one case, the *Koran* in the other) superseded and swallowed up the freedom of individual movement. Very much of the same legal restraint tied up the fancied autonomy of the Grecian citizen. Not the moral censor, but the constable was at his heels, if he allowed himself too large a license. In fact, so small a portion of his actions was really resigned to his own discretion, that the very humblest intellect was equal to the call upon its energies. Under these circumstances, what need for any public and official lecturer upon distinctions so few, so plain, so little open to casuistic doubts? To abstain from assault and battery; not to run away from battle *relicta non bene parmula*; not to ignore the deposit confided to his care, — these made up the sum of cases that life brought with it as possibilities in any ordinary experience. As an office, therefore, the task of teaching morality was amongst the ancients wholly superfluous. Pulpit there was none, nor any public teacher of morality.

As regarded his own moral responsibility, every man walked in broad daylight, needed no guide, and found none.

But Athens, the marvellous city that in all things ran ahead of her envious and sullen contemporaries, here also made known her supremacy. Civilization, not as a word, not as an idea, but as a thing, but as a power, was known in Athens. She only through all the world had a theatre, and in the service of this theatre she retained the mightiest by far of her creative intellects. Teach she could not in those fields where no man was unlearned; light was impossible where there could be no darkness; and to guide was a hopeless pretension when all aberrations must be wilful. But, if it were a vain and arrogant assumption to illuminate, as regarded those primal truths which, like the stars, are hung aloft, and shine for all alike,<sup>22</sup> neither vain nor arrogant was it to fly her falcons at game almost as high. If not light, yet life; if not absolute birth, yet moral regeneration, and fructifying warmth — these were quickening forces which abundantly she was able to engraft upon truths else slumbering and inert. Not affecting to teach the new, she could yet vivify the old. Those moral echoes, so solemn and pathetic, that lingered in the ear from her stately tragedies, all spoke with the authority of voices from the grave. The great phantoms that crossed her stage all pointed with shadowy fingers to shattered dynasties and the ruins of once-regal houses, Pelopidæ or Labdacidæ, as monuments of sufferings in expiation of violated morals, or sometimes — which even more

thrillingly spoke to human sensibilities — of guilt too awful to be expiated. And in the midst of these appalling records, what is their ultimate solution? From what keynote does Athenian Tragedy trace the expansion of its own dark impassioned music? *ἕβη* (*hybris*) — the spirit of outrage and arrogant self-assertion — in that temper lurks the original impulse towards wrong; and to that temper the Greek drama adapts its monitory legends. The doctrine of the Hebrew Scriptures as to vicarious retribution is at times discovered secretly moving through the scenic poetry of Athens. His own crime is seen hunting a man through five generations, and finding him finally in the persons of his innocent descendants. "Curses, like young fowls, come home in the evening to roost." This warning doctrine, adopted by Southey as a motto to his "*Kehama*," is dimly to be read moving in shadows through the Greek legends and semi-historic traditions. In other words, atrocious crime of any man towards others in his stages of power comes round upon him with vengeance in the darkening twilight of his evening. And, accordingly, upon no one feature of moral temper is the Greek Tragedy more frequent or earnest in its denunciations, than upon all expressions of self-glorification, or of arrogant disparagement applied to others.

What nation is it, beyond all that ever have played a part on this stage of Earth, which ought, supposing its vision cleansed for the better appreciation of things and persons, to feel itself primarily interested in these Grecian denunciations? What

other than China? When Coleridge, in lyric fury, apostrophized his mother-country in terms of hyperbolic wrath, almost of frenzy,

“ The nations hate thee ! ”

every person who knew him was aware that in this savage denunciation he was simply obeying the blind impulse of momentary partisanship; and nobody laughed more heartily than Coleridge himself, some few moons later, at his own violence. But in the case of China, this apostrophe — *The nations hate thee!* — would pass by acclamation, without needing the formality of a vote. Such has been the inhuman insolence of this vilest and silliest amongst nations towards the whole household of man, that (upon the same principle as governs our sympathy with the persons and incidents of a novel or a drama) we are pledged to a moral detestation of all who can be supposed to have participated in the constant explosions of unprovoked contumely to ourselves. A man who should profess esteem for Shakspeare's Iago, would himself become an object of disgust and suspicion. Yet Iago is but a fabulous agent; it was but a dream in which he played so diabolic a part. But the offending Chinese not only supported that flesh-and-blood existence which Iago had not, but also are likely (which Iago is not, in any man's dreams) to repeat their atrocious insolences as often as opportunities offer. Our business at present with the Chinese is — to speculate a little upon the Future immediately before us, so far as it is sure to be colored by the known dispositions



of that people, and so far as it ought to be colored by changes in our inter-relations, dictated by our improved knowledge of the case, and by that larger experience of Chinese character which has been acquired since our last treaty with their treacherous executive. Meantime, for one moment let us fix our attention upon a remarkable verification of the old saying adopted by Southey, that "Curses come home to roost." Two centuries have elapsed, and something more, since our national expansion brought us into a painful necessity of connecting ourselves with the conceited and most ignorant inhabitants of China. From the very first our connection had its foundations laid in malignity ; so far as the Chinese were concerned, in affected disdain, and in continual outbreaks of brutal inhospitality. That we should have reconciled ourselves to such treatment, formed, indeed, one-half of that apology which might have been pleaded on behalf of the Chinese. But why, then, *did* we reconcile ourselves ? Simply for a reason which offers the other half of the apology, — namely, that no thoroughly respectable section of the English nation ever presented itself at Canton in those early days as candidates for any share in so humiliating a commerce. On reviewing that memorable fact, we must acknowledge that it offers some inadequate excuse on behalf of the Chinese. They had seen nothing whatever of our national grandeur ; nothing of our power ; of our enlightened and steadfast constitutional system ; of our good faith ; of our magnificent and ancient literature ; of our colossal charities and

provision for every form of human calamity ; of our insurance system, which so vastly enlarged our moneyed power ; of our facilities for combining and using the powers of all (as in our banks the money of all) common purposes ; of our mighty shipping interest ; of our docks, arsenals, light-houses, manufactories, private or national. Much beside there was that they could not have understood, so that not to have seen it was of small moment ; but these material and palpable indications of power and antiquity, even Chinamen, even Changs and Fangs, Chungs and Fungs, could have appreciated ; yet all these noble monuments of wisdom and persevering energy they had seen absolutely not at all. And the men of our nation who had resorted to Canton were too few at any time to suggest an impression of national greatness. Numerically, we must have seemed a mere vagrant tribe ; and, as the Chinese even in 1851, and in the council-chamber of the emperor, settled it as the most plausible hypothesis that the English people had no territorial home, but made a shift (like some birds) to float upon the sea in fine weather, and in rougher seasons to run for "holes," upon the whole, we English are worse off than are the naked natures that affront the elements :

" If on windy days the raven  
Gambol like a dancing skiff,  
Not the less he loves his haven  
On the bosom of a cliff.

" Though almost with eagle pinion  
O'er the rocks the chamois roam,

Yet he has some small dominion  
Which no doubt he calls his home.'

Yes, no doubt. But, worse off than all these, — than sea-horse, raven, chamois, — the Englishman, it seems, of Chinese ethnography has not a home, except in crevices of rocks. What are we to think of that nation, which by its supreme councils could accredit such follies? We in fact suffer from the same cause, a thousand-fold exaggerated, as that which injured the French in past times amongst ourselves. Up to the time when Voltaire came twice to England, no Frenchman of eminence, or distinguished talents, had ever found a sufficient motive for resisting his home-loving indolence so far as to pay us a visit. The *court* had been visited in the days of James I. by Sully; in those of Charles II. by De Grammont; but the nation for itself, and with an honorable enthusiasm, first of all by Voltaire. What was the consequence? No Frenchman ever coming amongst us, — except (1) as a cook; (2) as a hair-dresser; (3) as a dancing-master, — was it unnatural in the English to appreciate the French nation accordingly?

"Paulum sepultæ distat inertiae  
Celata virtus."

What they showed us, *that*, in commercial phrase, we carried to their account; what they gave, for *that* we credited them; and it was unreasonable to complain of *our* injustice in a case where so determinately they were unjust to themselves. Not until lately have we in England done any justice to

the noble qualities of our French neighbors. But yet, for this natural result of the intercourse between us, the French have to thank themselves. With Canton the case was otherwise. Nobody having freedom could be expected to visit such a dog-kennel, where all alike were muzzled, and where the neutral ground for exercise measured about fifteen pocket-handkerchiefs. Accordingly, the select few who had it *not* in their power to stay away, proclaimed themselves *ipso facto* as belonging to that class of persons who are willing to purchase the privilege of raising a fortune at any price, and through any sacrifice of dignity, personal or national. Almost excusably, therefore, the British were confounded for a time with the Portuguese and the Dutch, who had notoriously practised sycophantic arts, carried to shocking extremities. The first person who taught the astonished Chinese what difference might happen to lurk between nation and nation was Lord Anson—not yet a lord; in fact, a simple commodore, and in a crazy old hulk; but who, in that same superannuated ship, had managed to plough up the timbers of the Acapulco galleon, though by repute<sup>23</sup> bullet-proof, and eventually to make prize of considerably more than half-a-million sterling for himself and his crew. Having accomplished this little feat, the commodore was not likely to put much value upon the “crockery ware” (as he termed the forts) of the Chinese. Not come, however, upon any martial mission, he confined himself to so much of warlike demonstration as sufficed for his own immediate

purposes. To place our Chinese establishments upon a more dignified footing was indeed a most urgent work; but work for councils more deliberate, and for armaments on a far larger scale. As regarded the present, such was the vast distance between Canton and Peking, that there was no time for this Anson aggression to reach the ears of the emperor's council, before all had passed off. It was but a momentary typhoon, that thoroughly frightened the flowery people, but was gone before it could influence their policy. By a pleasant accident, the Manilla treasure captured by Anson was passing in wagons in the rear of St. James' Palace, during the natal hour of the Prince of Wales (George IV.); consequently we are within sight, chronologically, of the period which will round the century dated from Lord Anson's assault. Within that century is comprised all that has ever been done by war or by negotiation to bring down upon their knees this ultra-gasconading, but also ultra-pusillanimous, nation. Some thirty and more years after the Anson skirmish, it was resolved that the best way to give weight and splendor to our diplomatic overtures was by a solemn embassy, headed by a man of rank. At that time the East India Company had a monopoly interest in the tea trade of Canton, as subsequently in the opium trade. What we had to ask from the Chinese was generally so reasonable, and so indispensable to the establishment of our national name upon any footing of equality, that it ought not for a moment to have been tolerated as any subject for debate. There is

a difficulty, often experienced even in civilized Europe, of making out any just equations between the titular honors of different states. Ignorant people are constantly guided in such questions by mere vocal resemblances. The acrimonious Prince Pückler Muskau, so much irritated at being mistaken in France for an Englishman, and in fifty ways betraying his mortifying remembrances connected with England, charges us with being immoderately addicted to a reverential homage towards the title of "Prince ;" in which, to any thoughtful man, there would be found no subject for blame ; since with us there *can* be no prince<sup>24</sup> that is not by blood connected with the royal family ; so that such a homage is paid under an erroneous impression as to the fact, but not the less under an honorable feeling as to the purpose ; which is that of testifying the peculiar respect in a free country cheerfully paid to a constitutional throne. But, if we had been familiarized with the mock princes of Sicily and Russia (amongst which last are found some reputed to have earned a living in St. Petersburg as barbers), we should certainly moderate our respect towards the bearers of princely honors. Every man of the world knows how little a French marquise or comtesse can pretend to rank with a British marchioness or countess ; as reasonably might you suppose an equation between a modern consul of commerce and the old Roman consul of the awful S. P. Q. R.

In dealing with a vile trickster like the Chinese executive, — unacquainted with any one restraint of decorum or honorable sensibility, — it is necessary

for a diplomatist to be constantly upon his guard, and to have investigated all these cases of international equation, before coming abruptly to any call for a decision in some actual case. Cromwell was not the man to have attached much importance to the question of choosing a language for the embodying of a treaty, or for the intercourse of the hostile envoys in settling the terms of such a treaty; and yet, when he ascertained that the French Court made it a point of honor to use their own language, in the event of any modern language being tolerated, he insisted upon the adoption of Latin as the language of the treaty.<sup>25</sup> With the Chinese, a special, almost a superstitiously minute, attention to punctilios is requisite, because it has now become notorious that they assign a symbolic and representative value to every act of intercourse between their official deputies and all foreign ambassadors. Does the ambassador dine at some imperial table — the emperor has been feeding the barbarians. Do some of the court mandarins dine with the ambassador — then the emperor has deigned to restore happiness to the barbarians, by sending those who represent his person to speak words of hope and consolation. Does the ambassador convey presents from his own sovereign to the emperor — the people of Peking are officially informed that the barbarians are bringing their tribute. Does the emperor make presents to the ambassador — in that case his majesty has been furnishing the means of livelihood to barbarians exhausted by pestilence, and by the failure of crops. Huc, the French missionary, who travelled in the highest

north latitudes of China, traversing the whole of the frightful deserts between Peking and Lassa (or, in *his* nomenclature, La Sae), the capital of Thibet, and who, speaking the Mongol language, had the rare advantage of passing for a native subject of the Chinese emperor, and therefore of conciliating unreserved confidence, tells us of some desperate artifices practised by the imperial government. In particular, he mentions this: Towards the close of the British war, a Tartar general — reputed invincible — had been summoned from a very distant post in the north to Peking, and thence immediately despatched against the detested enemy. Upon this man's *prestige* of invincibility, and upon the notorious fact that he really had been successful in repressing some predatory aggressors in one of the Tartarys, great hopes were built of laurel crops to be harvested without end, and of a dreadful retribution awaiting the doomed barbarian enemy. Naturally this poor man, in collision with the English forces, met the customary fate. M. Huc felt, therefore, a special curiosity to learn in what way the Chinese government had varnished the result in this particular case, upon which so very much of public interest had settled. This interest being in its nature so personal, and the name of the Tartar hero so notorious, it had been found impossible for the imperial government to throw their mendacity into its usual form of blank denial, applied to the total result, or of intricate transformation, applied to the details. The barbarians, it was confessed, had, for the present, escaped. The British defeat had *not* been of that vast extent



which was desirable. But why? The reason was, that, in the very paroxysm of martial fury, on coming within sight of the barbarians, the Tartar general was seized by the very impertinent<sup>26</sup> passion of pity. He pitied the poor wretches ; through which mistake in his passions, the red-haired devils effected their escape, doing, however, various acts of mischief in the course of the said escape ; such being the English mode of gratitude for past favors.

With a government capable of frauds like these, and a people (at least in the mandarin class) trained through centuries to a conformity of temper with their government, we shall find, in the event of any more extended intercourse with China, the greatest difficulty in maintaining the just equations of rank and privilege. But the difficulty as regards the people of the two nations promises to be a trifle by comparison with that which besets the relations between the two crowns. We came to know something more circumstantially about this question during the second decennium of this nineteenth century. The unsatisfactoriness of our social position had suggested the necessity of a second embassy. Probably it was simply an accidental difference in the temper of those forming at that time the imperial council, which caused the ceremonial *ko-tou* of court presentation to be debated with so much more of rancorous bigotry. Lord Amherst was now the ambassador, a man of spirit and dignity, to whom the honor of his country might have been safely confided, had he stood in a natural and intelligible position ; but it was the inevitable curse of an ambassador to Peking, that his

official station had contradictory aspects, and threw him upon incompatible duties. His first duty was to his country ; and nobody, in so many words, denied *that*. But this patriotic duty, though a *conditio sine qua non* for his diplomatic functions, and a perpetual restraint upon their exercise, was not the true and efficient *cause* of his mission. That lay in the commercial interests of a great company. This secondary duty was clearly his paramount duty, as regarded the good sense of the situation. Yet the other was the paramount duty, as regarded the sanctity of its obligation, and the impossibility of compromising it by so much as the shadow of a doubt or the tremor of a hesitation. Nevertheless, Lord Amherst was plied with secret whispers (more importunate than the British public knew) from the East India Company, suggesting that it was childish to lay too much stress on a pure ceremonial usage, of no more weight than a bow or a curtsey, and which pledged neither himself nor his country to any consequences. But, in its own nature, the homage was that of a slave. Genuflections, prostrations, and knockings of the ground nine times with the forehead, were not modes of homage to be asked from the citizen of a free state, far less from that citizen when acting as the acknowledged representative of that state.

For one moment, let us pause to review this hideous degradation of human nature which has always disgraced the East. That no Asiatic state has ever debarbarized itself, is evident from the condition of **WOMAN** at this hour all over Asia, and from this very abject form of homage, which already in the days of

Darius and Xerxes we find established, and extorted from the compatriots of Miltiades and Themistocles.<sup>27</sup>

There cannot be any doubt that the *ko-tou* had descended to the court of Susa and Persepolis from the elder court of Babylon, and to *that* from the yet elder court of Nineveh. Man in his native grandeur, standing erect, and with his countenance raised to the heavens

[*Os homini sublime dedit, cælumque tueri*],

presents a more awful contrast to man when passing through the shadow of this particular degradation, than under any or all of the other symbols at any time devised for the sensuous expression of a servile condition — scourges, ergastula, infibulation, or the neck-chains and ankle-chains of the Roman *atriensis*. “The bloody writing” is far more legible in this than any other language by which the slavish condition is or can be published to the world, because in this only the sufferer of the degradation is himself a party to it, an accomplice in his own dishonor. All else may have been the stern doom of calamitous necessity. Here only we recognize, without an opening for disguise or equivocation, the man’s own deliberate act. He has not been branded passively (personal resistance being vain) with the record of a master’s ownership, like a sheep, a mule, or any other chattel, but has solemnly branded himself. Wearing, therefore, so peculiar and differential a character, to whom is it in modern days that this bestial yoke of servitude as regards Christendom owes its revival? Without hope, the Chinese despot

would not have attempted to enforce such a Moloch vassalage upon the western world. Through whom, therefore, and through whose facile compliance with the insolent exaction, did he first conceive this hope?

It has not been observed, so far as we know, that it was Peter I. of Russia, vulgarly called Peter the Great, who prepared for us that fierce necessity of conflict, past and yet to come, through which we British, standing alone,—but henceforth, we may hope, energetically supported by the United States, if not by France,—have, on behalf of the whole western nations, victoriously resisted the arrogant pretensions of the East. About four years after the death of our Queen Anne, Peter despatched from St. Petersburg (his new capital, yet raw and unfinished) a very elaborate embassy to Peking, by a route which measured at least ten thousand versts; or, in English miles, about two-thirds of that distance. It was, in fact, a vast caravan, or train of caravans, moving so slowly that it occupied sixteen calendar months in the journey. Peter was by natural disposition a bully. Offering outrages of every kind upon the slightest impulse, no man was so easily frightened into a retreat and abject concessions as this drunken prince. He had at the very time of this embassy submitted tamely to a most atrocious injury from the eastern side of the Caspian. The Khan of Khiva—a place since made known to us all as the foulest of murdering dens—had seduced by perfidy the credulous little army despatched by Peter into quarters so widely scattered, that with little difficulty he had there massacred nearly the whole force; about three

or four hundreds out of so many thousands being all that had recovered their vessels on the Caspian. This atrocity Peter had pocketed, and apparently found his esteem for the khan greatly increased by such an instance of energy. He was now meditating by this great Peking embassy two objects: first, the ordinary objects of a trading mission, together with the adjustment of several disputes affecting the Russian frontier towards Chinese Tartary and Thibet; but, secondly, and more earnestly, the privilege of having a resident minister at the capital of the Chinese emperor. This last purpose was connected with an evil result for all the rest of Christendom. It is well known to all who have taken any pains in studying the Chinese temper and character, that obstinacy — obstinacy like that of mules — is one of its foremost features. And it is also known, by a multiplied experience, that the very greatest importance attaches in Chinese estimate to the initial movement. Once having conceded a point, you need not hope to recover your lost ground. The Chinese are, as may easily be read in their official papers and acts, intellectually a very imbecile people; and their peculiar style of obstinacy is often found in connection with a feeble brain, and also (though it may seem paradoxical) with a feeble moral energy. Apparently, a secret feeling of their own irresolution throws them for a vicarious support upon a mechanic resource of artificial obstinacy. This peculiar constitution of character it was, on the part of the Chinese, which gave such vast importance to what might now be done by the Russian ambassador

Who was he ? He was called M. De Isræloff, an officer in the Russian guards, and somewhat of a favorite with the czar. What impressed so deep a value upon this gentleman's acts at this special moment was, that a great crisis had now arisen for the appraisal of the Christian nations. None hitherto had put forward any large or ostentatious display of their national pretensions. Generally for the scale of rank as amongst the Chinese, who know nothing of Europe, they stood much upon the casual proportions of their commerce, and in a small degree upon old concessions of some past Chinese ruler, or upon occasional encroachments that had become settled through lapse of time. But in the East all things masqueraded and belied their home character. Popish peoples were, at times, the firmest allies of bigoted Protestants ; and the Dutch, that in Europe had played the noblest of parts as the feeble (yet eventually the triumphant) asserters of national rights, everywhere in Asia, through mean jealousy of England, had become but a representative word for hellish patrons of slavery and torture. All was confusion between the two scales of appreciation, domestic and foreign, European and Asiatic. But now was coming one that would settle all this in a transcendent way ; for Russia would carry in her trait, and compromise by her decision, most of the other Christian states. The very frontier line of Russia, often conterminous with that of China, and the sixteen months' journey, furnished in themselves exponents of the Russian grandeur. China needed no interpreter for *that*. She herself was great in

pure virtue of her bigness. But here was a brother bigger than herself. We have known and witnessed the case where a bully, whom it was found desirable to eject from a coffee-room, upon opening the window for that purpose, was found too big to pass, and also nearly too heavy to raise, unless by machinery ; so that in the issue the bully maintained his ground by virtue of his tonnage. That was really the case oftentimes of China. Russia seemed to stand upon the same basis of right as to aggression. China, therefore, understood her, and admired her ; but for all *that* meant to make a handle of her. She judged that Russia, in coming with so much pomp, had something to ask. So had China. China, during that long period when M. De Ismaeloff was painfully making way across the steppes of Asia, had leisure to think what it was that she would ask, and through what temptation she would ask it. There was little room for doubting. Russia being incomparably the biggest potentate in Christendom (for as yet the United States had no existence), seemed, therefore, to the Chinese mind the greatest, and virtually to include all the rest. What Russia did, the rest would do. M. De Ismaeloff meant doubtless to ask for something. No matter what it might be, he should have it. At length the ambassador arrived. All his trunks were unpacked ; and then M. De Ismaeloff unpacked to the last wrapper his own little request. The feeble-minded are generally cunning ; and therefore it was that the Chinese council did not at once say *yes*, but pretended to find great difficulties in the request, which was simply to arrange some disorders

on the frontier, but chiefly to allow of a *permanent* ambassador from the czar taking up his residence at Peking. At last this demand was granted—but granted conditionally. And what now might be the little condition? “O, my dear fellow—between you and me, such old friends,” said the Chinese minister, “a bauble not worth speaking of: would you oblige me, when presented to the emperor, by knocking that handsome head of yours nine times—that is, you know, three times three—against the floor? I would take it very kindly of you; and the floor is padded to prevent contusions.” Ismaeloff pondered till the next day; but on that next day he said, “I will do it.”—“Do what, my friend?”—“I will knock my forehead nine times against the padded floor.” Mr. Bell, of Antermony (which, at times, he writes Auchtermony), accompanied the Russian ambassador, as a leading person in his suite. A considerable section of his travels is occupied with this embassy. But, perhaps from private regard to the ambassador, whose character suffers so much by this transaction, we do not recollect that he tells us in so many words of this Russian concession. But M. De Lange, a Swedish officer, subsequently employed by the Czar Peter, does. A solemn court-day was held. M. De Ismaeloff attended. Thither came the allegada, or Chinese prime minister; thither came the ambassador’s friends and acquaintances; thither came, as having the official *entree*, the ambassador’s friend Hum-Hum, and also his friend Bug-Bug; and, when all is said and done, this truth is undeniable—that there and then (namely, in the



imperial city of Peking, and in Anno Domini 1720), M. De Ismaeloff did knock his forehead nine times against the floor of the Tartar khan's palace. M. De Lange's report on this matter has been published separately; neither has the fact of the prostration and the forehead knockings to the amount of nine ever been called in question.

Now, it will be asked, did Ismaeloff absolutely consent to elongate himself on the floor, as if preparing to take a swim, and then knock his forehead repeatedly, as if weary of life — somebody counting all the while with a stop watch, No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, and so on? Did he do all this without capitulating — that is, stipulating for some ceremonial return upon the part of the Chinese? O, no; the Russian ambassador, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and our own at the end of it, both bargained for equal returns; and here are the terms: The Russian had, with good faith, and through all its nine sections, executed the *ko-tou*; and he stipulated, before he did this, that any Chinese seeking a presentation to the czar, should, in coming to St. Petersburg, go through exactly the same ceremony. The Chinese present all replied with good faith, though doubtless stifling a little laughter, that *when* they or any of them should come to St. Petersburg, the *ko-tou* should be religiously performed. The English lords, on the other hand, — Lord Macartney, and subsequently Lord Amherst, — declined the *ko-tou*, but were willing to make profound obeisances to the emperor, provided these obeisances were simultaneously addressed by a high mandarin to the portrait

of George III. In both cases a man is shocked : by the perfidy of the Chinese in offering, by the folly of the Christian envoys in accepting, a mockery so unmeaning. Certainly the English case is better ; our envoy escaped the degradation of the *kc-tou*, and obtained a shadow ; he paid less, and he got in exchange what many would think more. Homage paid to a picture, when counted against homage paid to a living man, is but a shadow ; yet a shadow wears some semblance of a reality. But, on the other hand, for the Russian who submitted to an abject degradation, under no hope of any equivalent, except in a contingency that was notoriously impossible, the mockery was full of insult. The Chinese do not travel ; by the laws of China they cannot leave the country. None but starving and desperate men ever *do* leave the country. All the Chinese emigrants now in Australia, and the great body at this time quitting California in order to evade the pressure of American laws against them, are liable to very severe punishment (probably to decapitation) on reëntering China. Had Ismaeloff known what a scornful jest the emperor and his council were enacting at his expense, probably he would have bamboozed some of these honorable gentlemen, on catching them within the enclosed court of his private residence.<sup>28</sup>

However, in a very circuitous way, Ismaeloff *has* had his revenge ; for the first step in that retribution which we described as overtaking the Chinese was certainly taken by him. Russia, according to Chinese ideas of greatness, is the greatest (that is, broadest and longest) of Christian states. Yet, being

such, she has taken her dose of *ko-tou*. It followed, then, *a fortiori*, that Great Britain should take *hers*. Into this logic China was misled by Ismaeloff. The English were waited for. Slowly the occasions arrived; and it was found by the Chinese, first doubtfully, secondly beyond all doubt, that the *ko-tou* would not do. The game was up. Out of this catastrophe, and the wrath which followed it, grew ultimately the opium-frenzy of Lin, the mad Commissioner of Canton; then the vengeance which followed; next the war, and the miserable defeats of the Chinese. All this followed out of the attempt to enforce the *ko-tou*, which attempt never would have been made but for the encouragement derived from Ismaeloff, the ambassador of so great a power as Russia. But finally, to complete the great retribution, the war has left behind, amongst other dreadful consequences, the ruin of their army. In the official correspondence of a great officer with the present emperor, reporting the events of the Tae-ping rebellion, it is repeatedly declared that the royal troops will not fight, run away upon the slightest pretext, and in fact have been left bankrupt in hope and spirit by the results of their battles with the British. Concurrently with this ruin of the army, the avowed object of this great rebellion is to *exterminate* the reigning dynasty; and, if that event should be accomplished, then the whole of this ruin will have been due exclusively to its memorable insolence (the demoniac *hybris* of Greek tragedy) towards ourselves. Should, on the other hand, the Tae-ping rebellion,

which has now stood its ground for five years, be finally crushed, not the less an enormous revolution — possibly a greater revolution — will then have been accomplished in China, virtually our own work ; and fortunately it will not be in our power to retreat, as hitherto, in a false spirit of forbearance, from the great duties which will await us. The Tae-ping faction, however, though deadly and tiger-like in the spirit of its designs, offers but one element amongst many that are now fermenting in the bosom of Chinese society. We British, as Mr. Meadows informs us (p. 137 of “The Chinese and their Rebellions”), were regarded by the late emperor — by him who conducted the war against us — as the instruments employed “by Heaven” for executing judgment on his house. He was in the right to think so ; and our hope is that in a very few years we shall proclaim ourselves through Southern Asia as even more absolutely the destroyers of the wicked government which dared to promote and otherwise to reward that child of hell who actually *flayed alive* the unhappy Mr. Stead. That same government passed over without displeasure the similar atrocity of the man who decapitated nearly two hundred persons — white, brown and black, but all subjects of Great Britain, and all confessedly and necessarily unoffending, as being simply shipwrecked passengers thrown on the shore of China from the Nerbudda Indiaman. That same government gave titles, money, and decorations, to a most cowardly officer, on the sole assumption (whether simply false, or only exagger-

ated) that he had secretly poisoned one thousand British troops stationed in the island of Chusan.<sup>20</sup>

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Hardly a few weeks have passed since our initial notice of China, before already a new interest has gathered round the subject: a foreign interest, and a domestic interest; an interest derived from atrocities that are accomplished; an interest derived from perils that are impending; an interest such as the intelligent counted upon from the known perfidy of the Chinese; an interest more embittered than any of us expected from the factious violence of our own senate. Let not this expression be taxed with disrespect. Critical cases have a privilege; and we do but echo the clamor of the nation in its main centres of wealth and population, in London, Manchester, Liverpool, when we denounce the recent intrusions of our Legislature upon our old Chinese policy, by means of a tumultuary cabal, as tending, too palpably, to a collusion with the vilest purposes of our vilest oriental enemy. Have we forgot our experience? Fifteen years ago it cost Great Britain an average of three pitched battles for the unrooting from the Chinese intellect of each separate childish conceit or traditional fraud, that risked, that fettered, or that degraded (according to the caprice of the hour), one great commercial interest of the civilized earth.

To revise a treaty with China, to correct the text even of a solitary paragraph, or to introduce a supplementary clause, you must make your estimate for so many cannon-shot, rockets and shells, one or two campaigns, general actions counted by the dozen,

and suicides by the thousand.<sup>30</sup> In a land, therefore, where the most reasonable alterations are not effected otherwise than at the point of the bayonet, too painfully we are reminded that any encouragement to the aggressors from ourselves, as arguing internal feuds in our own camp, will tend to perpetuate the dispute.

On the 8th day of October, 1856, about eight o'clock in the morning, a very complex outrage was perpetrated near Canton by Chinese agents, some of them mandarins, wearing their official costume, upon a commercial vessel apparently, and, according to all legal presumption, BRITISH. In that word lay the *virus* of the offence. What the Chinese governor of Canton hungered and thirsted to put on record was, his hatred and contempt of our national flag — hatred that was real, contempt that was affected. In this branch of the offence merged all the rest, as by comparison trivial misdemeanors that might have been redeemed by a money payment; else the wrong was *not* trivial suffered by the crew — that is, by twelve men out of fourteen — arrested upon a doubt (probably simulated), affecting, at most, one man of the whole dozen; <sup>31</sup> secondly, the injury was *not* trivial suffered by the master in command of the ship, Thomas Kennedy, a British subject of good repute, born at Belfast; thirdly, the injury was *not* trivial suffered by some owner (as yet not clearly indicated) from an indefinite interruption to the commercial uses of his ship and cargo. These were wrongs, infamous when viewed as the promptings of one solitary official man, placed by his sovereign at the head

of a great province for the maintenance of order and for the distribution of justice ; but yet trifles, when ranked against other acts of the same ruler, and against the unprovoked insult which he had offered to our national flag.

This insult being accomplished, next came the judicial investigation, on *our* part, into its circumstances ; after which began the punishment inflicted by Admiral Seymour ; and *that*, though exemplary, is far indeed from having yet reached its consummation. In both chapters of the avenging work which ran so fast upon the heels of the abominable outrage, there occurred circumstances which merit notice. Let me cite two. The particular vessel which furnished the arena for Governor Yeh's atrocity was locally classed as a *lorcha*, and known by the name of the Arrow. It is immaterial to pause for a description or definition of a "*lorcha*," since no allegation whatever, on one side or on the other, is at all affected by the classification of the ship. But any fair and upright reviewer of the case, who wishes earnestly to hold the scales even between the parties, is likely enough to find himself perplexed by the contradictory statements as to the past history of the particular *lorcha* concerned. He will find in the Blue-book<sup>32</sup> recently laid before Parliament on this Canton explosion, a letter from Sir J. Bowring himself, in which he seems to admit that all was not sound in the pretensions of the Arrow ; and, at first sight, the English reader is met by a most painful impression that Sir John is confidentially confessing to Mr. Consul Parkes something or other which he

describes as unknown to the Chinese, but which (the natural inference is) would have bettered the case of Yeh, had it been known to him. Precisely at this point it is that one of two fatal blunders committed by Lord Derby, in abstracting the sum of the Canton reports, has misled all who relied on his authority. At p. 10 of the Blue-book, Sir John Bowring says [Hong-Hong, October 11]: "It appears, on examination, that the Arrow had no right to hoist the British flag; the license to do so expired on the 27th of September"—[thirteen days before the Chinese outrage]. And Sir John then goes on to say: "*But the Chinese had no knowledge of the expiry of the license.*"<sup>83</sup> Immediately, with rash haste, Lord Derby presumes the logic of the case to stand thus: "Between ourselves," he supposes Sir John to say, "you and I, Mr. Consul Parkes, are quite in the wrong box. If the Chinese knew all, we should n't have a leg to stand on. But luckily they *don't* know all. So let us keep our own counsel." Strange that Lord Derby *could* have ascribed such a meaning to any man in his senses that was not personating the character of a stage-villain. What Sir John wishes to say is this: that, as a matter of fact, there really *was* an irregularity (as it happened) in the case of the Arrow; but that this irregularity could be of no avail to Yeh as an excuse for the outrage, since it was entirely unknown to Yeh. *Being* unknown, therefore, it was immaterial whether the supposed irregularity had existed or not. However, Sir John had scarcely written his letter before he became aware that there had really been no irregularity at



all. The sailing license had indeed lapsed, but under circumstances which legally sustained its continued validity until the vessel should reach the port at which the license could be renewed. Sir John had made a mistake; but such a mistake as could lend no countenance to Yeh. The brief logic of the case, as understood by Lord Derby, is: "*Yeh does not know the truth, therefore let us keep him in the dark.*" But the true logic, in Sir John's meaning, was: "*Yeh does not know the truth, therefore let him not presume to plead it as the ground of his violence.*" Suppose that the Arrow *had* been, by oversight, stripped in part of her particular privileges, was it from this unguarded point—was it from this heel of Achilles—that the villain Yeh would have sought to steal his advantage? Not at all. In such a case, by moving under the sanction of a treaty, he would altogether have missed his triumph. Those persons totally misconceive the governor's purpose who impute to him a special pleader's subtlety in construing severely the terms on which we grant indulgences and dispensations. Yeh was not in search of a case where he really might find us trespassing a little to the right or left; on the contrary—and in the very broadest sense on the contrary—he sought for a case in which our right was clear and unequivocal. Else, if our right had been doubtful, *his* triumph would have been doubtful in trampling on it. But how, then, did Yeh purpose to give any even colorable or momentary air of equity to his outrage? Simply by drawing upon the old infamous times for precedents of violence, which the treaty of 1842, and the sup-

plementary treaty had forever abolished. Before the war of 1841 and 1842, the unlimited despot who sat in Canton arrested whom, and when, and how, he pleased. In this affair of the Arrow, the old obsolete system was suddenly revived. The pretence was, that amongst the crew of the Arrow were two men who had once been pirates. But such a pretence, whether true or false, was no longer valid. Neither we nor the Chinese were left at liberty in future to right ourselves. Had we complaints to urge? Had we criminals to apprehend? For all such purposes the treaty opened to us both a regular and pacific course. It was not alleged that we, on our part, had at all obstructed the fluent movement of public justice. The sole motive to Yeh's manœuvre was a determination on his part to humble us, and, as a preliminary step, to degrade our national honor. The late debates in both Houses betrayed a state of ignorance as to our relations with China, and as to the temper and profligacy of the Chinese people, which few were aware of. The subject was first treated in the Upper House; consequently, in the natural course of things, it was a lord, and really a brilliant lord, that first launched upon the public stage of politics the following almost inconceivable blunder. The noble orator was insisting upon the stupendous crop of wickedness which we British had recently grown in the neighborhood of Canton; and the proof which he cited was this — namely, that the “rebels,” by which unexplained term he meant evidently the Tae-pings, had actually joined their forces and made common cause with the imperial army.

Anything more desperately extravagant was never heard of amongst men. All who know anything of the *soi-disant* Christian rebels, commonly called the Tae-pings, are well aware that the one sole object of their political existence is the violent and bloody extermination of the reigning dynasty — that is, the family of Mantchoo Tartars, now, and since 1644, insecurely seated on the Peking throne. Not a proclamation have these rebels ever published, which has not fiercely proclaimed a twofold mission upon earth — namely, 1, to establish a monstrous form of corrupt Christianity upon the ruins of the several idolatries (often Fetish worships) in China; 2, to exterminate [note well, not to expel into their native regions of Eastern Tartary, but to decollate, to decapitate, to strangle, or more commonly to *exterminate*] the Tartar race, root and branch; and, having accomplished that mission (in which there really is some flavor of a religious purpose), to restore the old Ming or native Chinese dynasty. The very principle by which the Tae-ping rebellion *exists* (not merely acts and legislates, but actually has its being) is the unsparing destruction of the reigning house. And yet between that reigning house it is, and these rebels who have sworn its destruction, that Lord Derby supposes a coalition. It is true that a body of pirates calling themselves rebels did immediately take advantage of the troubles at Canton — not in any form of hostility to the British; on the contrary, in the very humblest attitude of suppliants. They pretended to connect themselves with the Tae-pings, simply on the conceit that we, being at feud with the imperial

authority, must naturally seek alliance with all people in the same predicament. But we had some years ago, in the time of Sir George Bonham, had very unsatisfactory interviews with the Tae-pings, and the pretended brother of Jesus Christ. We had found them weak, cruel, without systematic policy, and altogether as incomprehensibly arrogant as the reigning family. These new pretenders, however, were not even Tae-pings. Even as "rebels" they were spurious. Nor was there any appearance that they were at all better than a *swell-mob*. The ludicrous position of these pretended "rebels," whom Lord Derby represents as having suddenly joined the Imperialists against *us*, is, that, on being questioned with regard to the grounds and objects of their rebellion, they could not even assign the person against whom, or in support of whom, they were rebelling. Where, in our English slang, "these leaders hung out," or in what camps they proposed to establish head-quarters, were insoluble questions. Generally, it was collected, that wherever a man could be indicated as having probably ten dollars in his purse, against that man they were prepared to "rebel."<sup>84</sup>

Although the absurdity and drollery of the case, and the extreme disproportion between the grave realities of our official experience at Canton, and the romantic legends of Her Majesty's opposition, have the effect of drawing off the lightning of the national displeasure from the House of Lords, yet not the less it cannot be disguised that the accrediting of such nursery fables by dignified leaders and accomplished statesmen must operate, through many channels,

injuriously upon the character of our senate, and would, were not such a result intercepted by the savage duncery of Chinese mandarins, make us a by-word for credulity in the councils of Canton. To be objects of derision and banter to a nation of what, in old English, would have been styled *Half-wits*! — Heavens! what a destiny! In a memorable little poem of Donne's, entitled the "Curse," which perhaps offers the most absolute *chef d'œuvre* extant of condensation as to thinking and expression, one massy line is this :

“ May he be scorned by one whom all else scorn.”

Such an imprecation would assuredly be realized for any of our senators whom Hansard might transfer in a comprehensible form to the make-believe *literati* of China. It should be remembered by our senators that “*Nescit vox missa reverti* ;” or else centuries hence the mortified descendants of distinguished leaders may read with astonishment the monstrous memorials of ancestral credulity.

At page 118 of the Blue-book occurs the first notice of the pretended rebels. In Sir J. Bowring's letter, printed partially on this page, and dated November 25, 1856, it is first of all noticed that Yeh, amongst his other hateful falsehoods, was “ industriously circulating ” that we, the British, are “ in league with the rebel forces.” At page 119 occurs the second notice : On December 12, 1856, Sir J. Bowring makes the following entry into his journal meant for Lord Clarendon : “ I have received from

Mr. Secretary Wade a report (dated yesterday) to the effect that, in consequence of the withdrawal" (meaning by Mr. Governor Yeh) "of the troops from the open country<sup>35</sup> for the defence of Canton, crowds of bandits, calling themselves *rebels*, have devastated large districts, committing every sort of violence and excess." It is, indeed, most strange that the imperial commissioner should not have foreseen how certainly his rash quarrel with the treaty-powers would encourage movements such as those now described, and imperil the imperial authority, *probably beyond redemption*. These were counterfeit *rebels*, and others on the sea, of the same lawless character, who made advances to us, seeking shelter under our power, and the benefit of our countenance, aided by their most ambiguous name of *rebels*. Had these rebels been less determinately cruel, and had they been willing to renounce their mysterious pretensions to some ridiculous superiority, which Sir G. Bonham, in his sole conference with their chiefs, treated, as usual, with nothing of the requisite disdain, it was at one time (say four years ago) really becoming a question whether it might not be advisable to form a provisional alliance with *them*, rather than continue our support to the mouldering family at present on the throne. In the wickedness of wholesale murder the two factions are exactly on a level; and with our aid either party would be sure of a triumph. It happens, however, that, in fact, ~~we~~ never *did* make any overture of alliance. Never once, by the slightest expression of approval or collusion, have we given countenance or ground of hope

to the Tae-pings ; far less to the sham rebels, and, no doubt, as we had made a treaty with the reigning house, this line of policy (due to no merits of that house) is, upon the whole, the most becoming to our position.

At this moment we see the extraordinary spectacle in the English capital of a large party, composed of distinguished Englishmen, laboring to establish a charge of murder and multiplied incendiarism against their own compatriots in the East ; and for no other purpose than that of reaching one obnoxious leader, Sir John Bowring, we see them involving in the charge a gallant sailor, whose reputation, if tainted by shadows of doubt, touches the interests of the British navy. On the other side, ranged against Sir John and the admiral, we behold a real and undoubted murderer, the Governor of Canton, whom any coroner's inquest in England would assuredly find guilty of murder ; not as having by military means killed an English subject acting against him in open combat, but as having by two separate bribes<sup>36</sup> encouraged and suborned murderers. Three<sup>37</sup> men have already been assailed under this incitement. One, a Portugese in the English naval service, was saved (though wounded) by the aid which answered *critically* to his call. But early in the quarrel two others, both Englishmen, perished. Charles Bennet was seized suddenly by a crowd, whom he had approached without distrust, and was instantly decapitated. The other, too sure of the fate awaiting him, leaped into the sea, as a gentler and nobler enemy that neither tempted nor betrayed, and he died in solitary quiet.

Now, let us pause for a moment and consider. There have been cases, past all numbering, of men individually or in factions setting prices on the heads of their rivals, whom they chose or had reason to denounce as their enemies. History rings with such cases. But these were always the cases — or if excused, it was because they were presumed to be the cases — of men contending for some great prize, generally a crown, whose existence and security had become reciprocally incompatible. One or other, it was felt, must perish; and it was the supreme authority of self-preservation which conferred the right of inflicting death upon the baffled competitor. Even these were viewed oftentimes by all parties as afflicting necessities, which under that name only could be reconciled to human feelings. Turn from such conflicts, so natural and so deeply palliated, to the hellish atrocity of this inhuman murderer at Canton. What, let us ask briefly, had been his provocation? And supposing that he might, in his meagre faculty of judgment, have misconceived his own rights and position, or read in a false sense the steps taken by Sir J. Bowring and the British admiral, what men are those whom he has selected for the victims of his vengeance? He could scarcely hope that his pretended retaliation should alight upon the leaders of the British; and for all the rest, *they* were poor men without power, the very humblest in kind or in degree for disputing the orders of their superiors. But what was the provocation? It is worth the reader's while to follow the explanation as it unfolds itself to any one who reviews the whole



connection and relations between the Governor of Canton and the controllers of the British interests. Let us briefly sketch it. The war in 1841-2, which followed close upon the heels of the abominable oppressions exercised by Commissioner Lin, and of his lawless confiscations, did not unseal the eyes of the Chinese government,— nothing on this side the grave could do *that*,— but it left the whole aristocratic part of the nation lost in horror, astonishment, and confusion. For us also it brought strange light and revolutionary views upon the true available resources of China. The wretched government of Peking had neither men nor money, and entirely through its own vices of administration. We ourselves never brought above nine thousand infantry into the field, no cavalry (which, in some instances, would have been worth its weight in gold), and at the utmost three thousand miscellaneous reserves, artillery, marines, sailors, &c. The Chinese, by a great effort, sometimes brought five men to our two; though never in one instance were they able to make good their ground, although often aided by the advantage of lofty walls, which our men had to scale. Pretty nearly the greatest number that they were able to manœuvre on one field against us ran up to seventeen or eighteen thousand. Think, reader, with astonishment (but with horror when you consider the cause) of this awful disproportion to the reputed population of this vast empire. Grant, as readily one *may* grant, that this population is hyperbolically exaggerated, still there is ground for assuming eighty millions, or one-fifth part of the ridiculous four hundred millions, which

some writers assume ; and, even on this diminished scale, you have a population larger perhaps by fourteen millions, certainly by ten millions, than that of martial Russia. It is a fact in the highest degree probable, that neither Circassia nor Algerine Arabia has brought into the field forces numerically smaller than this monstrous China, whose area is hard upon one million three hundred thousand square English miles — that is, about eleven times larger<sup>38</sup> than the Britannic Isles. Inconceivable, therefore, is the martial poverty of China ; and even yet the worst has not been said. Of the ridiculously small armies produced by China, only the Tartar section displayed any true martial qualities ; and one fact which demonstrates the paucity of this meritorious section is, that on the approach of the final panic<sup>39</sup> it was found necessary to summon five thousand of these Tartars from Thibet, and other extramural regions, as we learn from the French missionaries, MM. Huc and Gabet. For the very last reënforcement, on which the Mantchoo throne was likely to depend, a summons was requisite to regions beyond the Wall, at distances of one, two, and even three thousand miles !

In 1842 the war had come to an end, through the absolute exhaustion of the Chinese in every possible resource. Men, money, munitions of war, even provisions locally, all were drained. Three great aggravations of the case had arisen almost simultaneously : the emperor had incautiously suffered himself, in a sudden paroxysm of rabid fury against the British, to say, “Spare no cost in *exterminating*”

(such was his uniform word) "the profligate barbarians;" upon which the two maritime provinces of Chekeang and Fokien took him at his word, in a few months had run up an account of eleven million taels (three taels to one pound sterling), which in the spring of 1842 called for instant liquidation; and, meantime (which was the most dismal feature of the case), nothing whatever had the provinces to show in return for such a fearful expenditure, except indeed a few shameless romances of Bobadil victories, which even the stolid emperor now began to see through as mockeries; whilst daily it became more certain that four-fifths of the eleven millions had been embezzled by the mandarins. Here was one exasperation of the public calamity. A second was, that whilst the English at Chusan and Koolangsoo lived generally on the very best terms with the inhabitants, never pillaged them, and never imposed fines or pecuniary contributions upon them, the pauper part of the native population (a very numerous part in many provinces of China) followed our army like carrion crows, blackening the whole face of the land as they settled upon the derelict property, to which unavoidably our victorious troops had laid open the road. Always the pillagers of China were the Chinese. A third aggravation of the ruin was, that vast floods were abroad, in many cases destroying the crops. In our own country, comparatively so limited, at a certain critical part of the autumn, it is often said that unseasonable weather makes a difference to the nation of one million pounds sterling in each successive period of twenty-four hours; in

China, where there is so much less of vicarious dependence upon animal diet, it may be guessed in how vast an excess of range must operate any derangement of the cereal crops. Such was the misery which, amidst infinite gnashing of teeth, compelled the emperor to make a hasty and humiliating peace. The misery of this period might be received as a solemn foretaste of deeper woes awaiting this wicked prince and nation in coming times. It needs no spirit of prophecy to denounce this. Such tempers as govern those who are here concerned carry with them to a certainty their own fearful chastisements, when brought (as now at last they are) upon a wider stage of action, and forced into daylight.

Peace, then, was made ; and peace, to the deadly mortification of the Chinese court, was followed by a treaty. We were not going to let the impression of our victories exhale ; we insisted, therefore, on such results from our martial successes as our experience had then taught us to be requisite ; but unhappily, such is our general spirit of moderation in dealing with those who cannot appreciate moderation, we demanded far too little, as now we find. And even of that little we have allowed the Chinese fraudulently to keep back all that displeased the mobs in great cities.

The peace, therefore, and the treaty were finished ; and things should have settled back, it was fancied, into their old grooves at Canton. Heavens ! what a mistake ! Not until all parties resumed their old habits at the southernmost point of China, did any of them realize experimentally the prodigious revolu-

tion. There — where heretofore the haughty ruler of Canton issued his superb ukase, “Go, and he goeth — do this, and he doeth it” — now walked, in conscious independence and admitted equality, a British plenipotentiary, having rights of his own, and knowing how to maintain them. Instead of flying for a few hours’ shelter from Chinese wrath to poor trembling Macao, this plenipotentiary had now a home and a flag that nobody could violate with impunity. Hong-Kong was, for itself, little better than a rock; but, which was a point of more importance to us, the harbor attached to that rock was worthy of England. In a map of China what a pin’s point is Hong-Kong! And yet, through all that vast empire, there is not one refuge so impregnable to the whole embattled Orient.

Now, then, exactly in proportion as we had become almost as invulnerable as the air to the idle weapons of the governor, more frantic grew his morbid craving for wounding us. But how? Nothing was left to him but a crime. To violate our flag — that was the only way in which he could sting. But it was a way in which he could not sting twice. Measures of repression and measures of chastisement followed instantly. It was felt most justly by all the official people on the spot that the spirit of aggression was nursed by the submission, on our part, to exclusion from free access to Canton — this being at once a traditional insult to ourselves, and a flagrant violation of four separate treaties. All the defences, therefore, of Canton, one after another, were destroyed; and not merely in their fittings and

immediate capacity for service, as had too often been tolerated before ; they were now mined and blown up, so as to leave them heaps of ruins. It had been a trial of strength between ourselves and Yeh. He had declared that we should not enter Canton ; we had replied that we would. Accordingly, Admiral Seymour and the plenipotentiary not only walked over the ruined defences into that city, but into the residence (Yamun) of Yeh, sat down on Yeh's sofas, and redeemed their vow. Mere frenzy seems then to have taken possession of Yeh ; he looked round for some weapon of retaliation, but could find none—none that was tolerated by the usages of any nation raised above savagery. Then it was—and in an evil hour for himself, if we prove faithful to our duty—that Yeh dispersed everywhere his offers of blood-money to murderers. Yet, in Mr. Cobden's eyes, Yeh is an injured man. Now, on the other side, hear Admiral Seymour's vigilant interposition on behalf of the Cantonese. In the very midst of the excitement at the moment of storming the breach in the Canton wall, on the morning of November 29, the admiral took the following precautions : “ Before the landing took place, I assembled the officers, and urgently impressed upon them (as I had previously done by written orders) the necessity of restraining the men from molesting the persons and property of the inhabitants, confining warlike operations against the troops only ; and I have pleasure in bearing testimony to the forbearance of the seamen and marines.”

Again, on the capture of the Bogue and Anunghoy Forts, mounting jointly four hundred and ten guns,

the dastardly mandarins in command had secured boats for their own escape, but had left their followers unprovided for. Upon this the several Chinese garrisons had rushed into the water, as their sole resource against our victorious stormers. What course, in these circumstances, did the admiral adopt? He declined even to make prisoners of the men (a generosity perhaps indiscreet, considering the pressure everywhere upon the Chinese government for troops); and, without even amputating the tails of the men, a measure sometimes adopted by us in 1842 to braver men than the Chinese, — namely, to the Tartar troops, — the admiral most kindly took them all on board, and put them ashore uninjured. In many other cases, the anxious care of this admiral — whom Mr. Cobden involves in the same reproaches as the plenipotentiary — was to stand between the Chinese and all injury that it was possible to avoid, though many of these Chinese were those very Cantonese who had converted their city into a den of murder. And the return for this forbearance is, that secret murderers are hired by Yeh, not merely against soldiers and marines, indicated by their uniforms, but against non-combatants utterly disconnected from the diplomatic interests at issue, or the warlike service ministerial to those interests. Mr. Cobden will probably find reason hereafter to repent of his motion as the worst day's work he ever accomplished; and the more so because, first, in order to protect the very existence of the British in China, it will be indispensable to pursue the same *virtual* policy as that of Sir J. Bowring, whatever change may be made

in names or forms ; secondly, because our supreme government at home is already committed to this policy, by the formal approbation given to the whole of the warlike proceedings<sup>40</sup> against Canton, under the official seal of Lord Clarendon. (See his letter to the lords of the Admiralty in reference to Sir M. Seymour.)

Now, let us come to the *practical* suggestions which the past, in connection with the known knavery of the Chinese administration through all its ranks and local subdivisions, imperatively prescribes.

First, as to an appeal, which is talked of generally, to the emperor at Peking. Nothing will come of this — nothing but evil, if it is managed as hitherto it has been. Here it is, and perhaps here only, that Sir J. Bowring has failed in his duty. We make a treaty with this emperor, or at least with his father. Finding it insufficient, we make four treaties — one in 1842, one in 1843, a third in 1846, and a final one in 1847. Every one of these in succession has recognized our right to move freely in and out of Canton. But always we have permitted the governor for the time to set aside this right, upon an assurance that the obstacle lay in the irritable temper of the mob ; that this mob could not be controlled for the present ; but that, in some mysterious way (never explained), at an indefinite period in futurity, the requisite subordination would probably be developed. Upon this, at various times, appeals have been presented to the emperor (not the emperor under whom the treaties were extorted, but the present emperor, his son ; and uniformly these appeals have taken the



form of petitions, to which uniformly the Peking reply has been by one insolent *No, sans* phrase. Now, what child's play is this! We make a treaty; we begin by permitting the public officers to evade the fulfilment of it, without so much as a plausible pretext. The mob is not satisfied, that is the curt diplomatic reply; and mighty thrones are instructed to await the pleasure (now through fourteen years) of a vile murdering populace for the concession of their primary rights. A treaty has been obtained, at the cost of a war, and therefore of many thousand lives; and then we send a humble petition to the beaten prince that he will graciously fulfil the terms of this treaty. Sir J. Bowring has been blamable in this; but in the very opposite direction to that indicated by Mr. Cobden. Briefly, then, the national voice cries loudly, "No more petitions to Peking!" Once for all, a stern summons to the fulfilment of the Chinese undertakings. Every year the smarting of the wounds inflicted by the war is cooling down, the terror is departing; and *a new war will become necessary*, which would have been made unnecessary by the simple course of building on the terrors of the first war. It cannot be denied by the whole body of our official people — consuls, plenipotentiaries, &c. — that they have in this point acted foolishly — namely, that whenever the swindling commissioners of the Quantung province or city have been called on to assign the plea under which they claim further indulgence, they have always replied, "*O, the mob!*" without further comment, neither showing through what channel the mob exercised any present in-

fluence, nor by what unspeakable agency it was pretended that the friends of this mob looked reasonably for its amendment. We have, in short, allowed ourselves to be trifled with, and to furnish a standing jest to all the diplomatic people of China.

Secondly, next as to a resident ambassador of high rank in Peking. We know not what we ask. The thing has been amply tried. As great a power as ourselves, though moulded on a different model, — the mighty Court of St. Petersburg, — tried this scheme with much patience, and swallowed affronts that would have injured the prestige of the czar, had they been reported through Europe. But all came to nothing, through the insurmountable chicanery of the highest Chinese officers, and through the inhuman insolence of the court. It is true the Russian envoy was not of the very highest rank ; and that was a dismal oversight of the czar. But, possibly, the czar shrank from compromising his own grandeur in the person of a higher representative. However, the envoy was high enough to be held presentable at court, and was invited to hunting-parties. But the mortifications and affronts put upon him passed all count and valuation. Soldiers were quartered in his house, and stationed at his gate, to examine, by inquisitorial (often tormenting) modes, what might be the business of every visitor. Sometimes they horsewhipped these visitors for presuming to come at all, on any errand whatever. Sometimes they hustled the visitor violently. Sometimes (indeed always, as regarded their true purposes) they insisted on large money bribes. In short, they made

the envoy weary of his existence. The same infamous trick, so ignoble and scoundrelish, was practised upon the Russian as upon the British ambassador. The emperor, through pure insolence, insisted on feeding the embassy. Well, this was brutal ; but, if the embassy really *were* fed, the main end was answered. But oftentimes the supply of provisions was utterly neglected. On the one hand, it was construed into an affront to the emperor if his guests purchased provisions — it was even dangerous to do so under so capricious a despotism ; and yet, on the other hand, if provisions were *not* purchased, frequently the servants suffered absolute starvation. In the Russian case the Chinese agent laid down the imperial allowance on the ground of the court-yard ; nor was the service ever much improved. And in the case of Lord Amherst, after a fatiguing day's travel, the embassy was introduced to a court, in which was fixed a table bearing a dish of broken meat, such as in England would be offered to itinerant beggars ; and for all the beverage that waited upon this sumptuous repast, the gentlemen were referred to a number of horse-buckets filled with water. On remonstrating, — for it was too evident that an indignity was designed, — the mandarin in attendance wilfully heightened the affront by pleading, with mock humility, that the horse-buckets were introduced on the special assurance that such was the usage of our country. The main object, meantime, of this puerile insult was altogether baffled, since nobody, but a Chinese servant or two, condescended to touch anything. It was a most unfortunate arrangement for

the Russian envoy that he was too closely connected with the commercial business of his countrymen. Upon this the Chinese, as usual, took occasion to build every form of insult. *They* did not condescend to matters of trade; and, really, if the Russians wanted to be protected, they must not apply on such trifles to great men. A most seasonable opening occurred for a retort to the Russian minister; and, perilous as it was to play with such sneers, the temptation to do so was too strong for human patience. It happened that, at the very moment when the poor Russian dealers began to bring forward for sale a vast mass of Siberian furs, the emperor suddenly forestalled and ruined their trade by coming down upon the market with a matter of twenty thousand similar furs from the region of the river Amour. Upon this the envoy observed, with bitter irony, that it made him truly happy — O, it was delightful! — to find that his Chinese Majesty had seen the error of his opinions, and was at length going to consecrate commerce by entering “into business himself” in the wholesale line as a furrier. The great mandarins were all taken aback: they colored, looked very angry, and then very foolish. “It was n’t to be imagined,” they said, “that his Celestial Majesty cared about making gain; O, no! He only wanted to——” “Make a little profit,” said the Russian, filling up the blank.

Thirdly, it is probable, therefore, that our government, if they were to read and muse a little on the journal of the Russian envoy,<sup>41</sup> the one solitary memorial of diplomatic residence amongst this odious

people, will think twice before they propose to any British nobleman a service at once so degrading and so perilous. There is no exaggeration in saying *perilous*. Our own experience furnishes sufficient vouchers. Lord Amherst, in 1816, although disposed individually to make far too serious concessions to the ridiculous claims of this savage court, although he submitted (which surely was almost a criminal act) to be advertised, on the outside of the boats conveying himself and suite, as "the English tribute-bearer," and was even inclined to perform the *ko-tou*, had he not been recalled to nobler sentiments by Sir George Staunton (one of his two associates in the legatine functions), yet could not, by all his obsequious overtures, so long as he retained any reserve of manly self-respect, secure the decencies of civility from a court which he had visited at the cost of a twenty-five-thousand-mile voyage.<sup>42</sup> He was driven back with contumely and violence on the very morning of reaching the emperor's palace; no resting time allowed after an exhausting journey, pursued most unnecessarily the whole night long; mobs of ruffians were allowed to rush into the room where he was seeking a moment's repose, and to treat *him*, the representative of the British Majesty, together with his suite, as a show of wild beasts. With such headlong fury was Lord Amherst ordered off, that he himself and his experienced assessors, knowing the capricious violence of this besotted despotism, did seriously regard it as no impossible catastrophe that the whole embassy might be summarily put to death. Lord Amherst's courage in persisting, unterrified

redeems his error as to the *ko-tou*. It is probable enough that, but for one refrigerating suggestion (namely, the close proximity of our vast Indian empire), Lord Amherst and his train would really have been sacrificéd to the brute arrogance of China. England was far off, but Hindostan was near; and it appears, by the ridiculous collections of Lin, in fifty volumes 4to, that circuitously through Thibet some nursery tales had reached Peking of our Indian conquests, and in particular of our conflict with Nepaul. But so preposterously were the relations and proportions of all objects distorted, that Lin (who may pass for a fair representative of the Chinese *literati*) conceived our main Indian empire to be called London, and lying somewhere near to the Himalayas.

Such was the wrath of Taoukwang and his council; and so was it probably averted. Fear of the phantom London on the Ganges was too probably what saved Lord Amherst's head. Now, when men came to read of this danger threatened, and of these indignities suffered, murmurs arose amongst the intelligent that the government at home should have exposed a band of faithful servants and the honor of the national name to such useless humiliations. Nothing at all was gained by the mission. At no time was there a prospect of gaining anything; but there was a very serious risk, through many weeks, of a tragedy that would have cost us an extra war. Let us keep *that* in mind — that a war stands as the issue and arbitrement of future negotiations with China not wisely managed; and *wisely* means above all

things so managed as to allow no effect whatever to these pretensions of China, which all men of sense or feeling no longer mention without disgust. One or two of these hateful pretensions shall be noticed immediately ; but, meantime, let us pause for a moment to remark upon the new form which our negotiations are going to assume. Lord Granville has announced that France and the United States will now join us in our new diplomacy, and give weight to our demands. Even this arrangement marks on the part of our government a non-acquaintance with the Chinese nature and condition of culture. These two advantages we have a chance of drawing from the association of the two nations in our overtures, that, by lightening the cost, they will improve the quality of our interventions, and that each of them is more irritably jealous of even shadows that may sully the bright disk of their national honor than we are ; and it is to their credit, in Shakspeare's words,

“ Greatly to find quarrel in a straw,”

wherever a hostile purpose is on the watch to found future assumptions and insolent advantages upon what seemed to be accident, and was therefore neglected as such. In this direction we shall find useful allies in these great nations, that will not so lightly make rash concessions as we have done. But this is the least part of what our government is expecting. They fancy that the great authority, the authentic prestige of two leading peoples in Christendom will have its natural weight even with a silly

oriental nation. There are, perhaps, one or two oriental nations — for instance, the Burmese — who seem to have a natural aptitude for conforming their apprehensions to the new social phenomena introduced to them by European civilization ; but in the Chinese this power is stifled in its earliest stages by the enormity of their self-conceit. In any case they would allow no weight to foreign nations, even if made acquainted with their high pretensions. But they are *not* acquainted with the elements of those pretensions. Having no knowledge of geography, none of history, and, above all, none of civilization and its marvels, how or when should they learn, for instance, to respect the splendor of France ? All that they know of France is, that two centuries ago some unintelligible missionaries introduced an obscure doctrine into China, at one time protected by the caprice of this or that prince, at another persecuted by the cruelty of his successor. At the time of our war with China, some of the provincial governors, from pure childishness, were in hopes that by a mere request they could induce some of the barbarian nations to attack the British.<sup>43</sup> One of these governors undertook to coax the French by flattery into this belligerent humor. But how ? The point on which he opened his flattery was, that *his* sovereigns, the kings of France, were truly meritorious ; for that in all generations they had been “submissive” and “obedient” to the great Emperor of China, and had never swerved from their “duty.” This was the highest form of merit which his Chinese imagin-



ation could admit, and the sole bait with which the poor fool angled for a French alliance.

Recurring, then, to those hateful pretensions of superiority, surely the nation may expect that, if the new negotiators are sent to Peking, they will not (as heretofore) be consigned in travelling to the insolent authority of the Chinese, ordered to stop at this point or that, furnished with insulting supplies on one day, with none at all on the next, and forbidden to purchase provisions for themselves out of delicacy to a prince who finds no indelicacy in suffering his guests to starve. But this is a trifle by comparison with other arrogances of the Chinese ; and these ought surely to be met by a preliminary letter from the associated nations, and not left as subjects for a mere remonstrance from the ambassadors. In substance something like this should surely be sent forward beforehand :

That, whilst the Three Powers allied for the purposes of this negotiation approach his Chinese Majesty with respect for the station which he occupies, at the same time they feel bound to protest against the offensive terms in which his Chinese Majesty has always claimed some imaginary superiority. More especially they must notice with displeasure the secret pretension which his Chinese Majesty seems to assume of levying some paramount allegiance from their subjects. This pretension will no longer be endured. It will not be tolerated in future that his majesty should describe the British, French, or Americans, as "*rebels*," or as "*repenting*," and "*returning to their duty*," when making peace with him. Even as

regards his more general claim of superiority, the allied powers are unable to understand on what his majesty builds. If on population, as regards the amount numerically, China has not established her pretensions ; whilst, as regards its *quality*, it is sufficient to refer his Chinese Majesty to the result of his past military experience. It is possible that his Chinese Majesty founds upon *extent* of dominions ; and in that case he is likely to remain under his delusion so long as he is guided by the maps and geographical works of his own subjects. It is enough to say that the American United States possess a territory larger than the Chinese, even counting China beyond the Wall. This total area of China may amount to three millions of square English miles. But the Queen of Great Britain possesses a territory of seven millions, if her American and Australian states are included, and without counting the vast British territory in Hindostan ; whilst, as regards China within the Wall, it is pretty nearly on a level with the British possessions in India, — close neighbors to his Chinese Majesty, — each counting nearly one million, three hundred thousand square English miles. The Three Powers, announce, finally, that they will no longer tolerate the practice of setting prices upon the heads of their subjects by Chinese governors, but will, after this notice, hang all such savage traffickers in blood whenever they may happen to be captured.

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A dreadful echo lingers on the air from our past dealings with the Chinese — an echo from the cry of

innocent blood shed many years ago by as British adulterating wickedly with Chinese wickedness. Not Chinese blood it is that cries from the earth for vengeance, but blood of our own dependent, a poor humble serving man, whom we British were bound to have protected, but whom, in a spirit of timid and sordid servility to Cantonese insolence, we, trembling for our Factory menaced by that same wicked mob that even now is too likely to win a triumph over us, and coerced by the agents of the East India Company (always upright and noble in its Indian — always timid and cringing in its Chinese policy), surrendered to the Moloch that demanded him. The case was this: Always, as against aliens, the Chinese have held the infamous doctrine that the intention, the motive, signifies nothing.<sup>44</sup> If you, being a foreigner, should, by the bursting of your rifle, most unwillingly cause the death of a Chinese, you must die. Luckily we have since 1841 cudgelled them out of this hellish doctrine; but such *was* the doctrine up to 1840. Whilst this law prevailed — namely, in 1784 — an elderly Portuguese gunner, on board a Chinaman of ours lying close to Whampoa, was *ordered* to fire a salute in honor of the day, which happened to be June 4, the birthday of George III. The case was an extreme one; for the gunner was not firing a musket or a pistol for his own amusement, but a ship's gun under positive orders. It happened, however, that some wretched Chinese was killed. Immediately followed the usual insolent demand for the unfortunate gunner. Some resistance was made; some disputing and wrangling followed; the Mephis-

topheles governor looking on with a smile of deadly derision. A life was what he wanted — blood was what he howled for: *whose* life, *whose* blood, was nothing to him. Settle it amongst yourselves, said he to the *gentlemen* of the Factory. They *did* settle it: the poor, passive gunner, who had been obliged to obey, was foully surrendered — was murdered by the Chinese, under British connivance; and things appeared to fall back into their old track.

Since then our commerce has leaped forward by memorable expansions. I that write these words am not superstitious; but this one superstition has ever haunted me — that foundations laid in the blood of innocent men are not likely to prosper.

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#### POSTSCRIPT.

[Written subsequently to the British Government's latest publication of despatches from Hong-Kong, and subsequently to the Chinese intelligence received by way of France.]

FIRST in order of interest is the French despatch published in the "*Moniteur de la Flotte*." This French news reached England on the 15th of April, between the evening of which day and the morning of the 16th, it was dispersed all over the island. The amount of the news is this — that the river Peiho (North River), which communicates directly between Peking and the Yellow Sea, had been sacrificed for the present to the fears prevailing in the capital. A river as broad as the Clyde, and having the same commercial value, had been ruined by

twenty-two stone dams, leaving a passage to the water, but destroying the navigation. Now, *first*, as to the truth of this intelligence; *secondly*, as to its *value*. As to its *truth*, the main reasons for doubting it, if reported of any wise nation, are wanting in the case of the Chinese. It is a suicidal act: but all modes of suicide are regarded with honor in China and in Japan. Self-homicide, self-murder, and the sacrifice of all remote interests to a momentary pique, or to the spiteful counteraction of a rival, all these are admired, *have been* practised by the government, and *are* practised at this moment. When the vast line of maritime territory was ravaged in former generations by piratical invaders, the emperor, instead of making prudent treaties with the aggressors, simply compelled the population, at the cost of infinite distress, to move inland, so as to leave a zone ten miles broad swept clean of all population. And, at this moment, Admiral Seymour reports a similar attempt to operate upon the waters of Canton, by the submersion of stone-laden junks. Here, indeed, lies the admiral's most cruel anxiety: he is working night and day to keep open the main current with his present narrow means, until reënforcements arrive. Will he succeed? It is too plain that he himself has deep anxieties lest he should not.

Returning for one moment to the *Peiho*, the first question (as to the *truth* of the news) there can, as we see, be no reason for doubting. But, *secondly*, as to its *value*: what harm will it do? None at all. The French journal, the nautical "*Moniteur*,"

speaks of Peking as thus placed out of all danger. By no means. Our own advances upon Peking in 1842 were not made by that approach. The great river, the Yang-tse-Keang, laughs at *dams*. It is on *THAT* quarter, — that is, from the south, and not chiefly from the northern river Peiho — that we can famish Peking into submission. But, *secondly*, there are other and richer cities than Peking; richer in tributes (generally paid in kind). *Thirdly*, the entire imports into the northern half of China from the southern can be swept at one haul into the nets of our cruisers on the Yellow Sea; the Peiho signifying little, except as to a *shorter* passage to the capital for him that commands the sea. But for us, who know the road to Peking by two routes, this Peiho news is a bagatelle; it ruins a Chinese interest, without much affecting any that is British.

But now, having dismissed the French news, lastly for our own: — I confess that it is gloomy. It is always the best policy, as it is peculiarly our British policy, not to deceive ourselves, but to tell the worst. The worst in the present case is this: the Governor of Singapore, it was well known, had, in last November, offered a reënforcement of five hundred good troops. This, because the case was not considered urgent, had been *then* declined. But *now* — namely, in January of this year — that same aid has been pressingly applied for by the admiral and the plenipotentiary.

Secondly, they have written to Calcutta for an immediate reënforcement of five thousand troops.

Thirdly, they are most anxiously waiting for gun-

boats, with which they can do nothing in pursuing the Chinese junks into shallow creeks. It is the old misery of the Crusaders : their heavy cavalry could not pursue the light Arabian horsemen, by whom they were teased all day long, and had no effectual means of retort.

Fourthly, but the worst feature of the case is this : seventy per cent. of the Hong-Kong population are domestic servants ; and chiefly from one sole district. The " elders " in this district (namely, the heads of families) have been coërced by Yeh into ordering home all these servants, who have at the same time been warned, that, to win a welcome from the government, there is but one acceptable offering which they can bring — namely, the heads of their masters. In a colony already distressed and agitated, we may guess the effect of such a notification.

## NOTES.

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NOTE 1. Page 143.

Originally published in this form.

NOTE 2. Page 144.

“*Putrescent* :” — See the recorded opinions of Lord Amherst’s suite upon the personal cleanliness of the Chinese.

NOTE 3. Page 145.

“*For the next six months* :” — Naturally the public anxiety cannot intermit or decay until the two capital interests are secured — first, of security for our countrymen threatened by a government universally *capable* of murder, even when not actively engaged in stimulating murder ; secondly, of our indispensable commerce in tea. As regards the first point, let it be remembered that in 1842 the present emperor’s father, with the approbation of his son, bestowed large rewards and titular honors upon a man who pleaded no other merit than that, in the island of Chusan, during our long occupation of it, he had, by poisoning the waters, caused the agonizing death of a thousand British subjects, chiefly soldiers. The exaggeration of his success does not alter the character of his claim, or the *animus* of the emperor and his council in recognizing that claim as a ground for public distinction. Here — namely, on the point of personal security — lies, for the moment, our most pressing interest. On the other — namely, our commercial interest — I will say a word or two in the text. But, taking the two interests together, in less time than six months — allowing for the overland journey, voyage, &c., of the supreme commissioner, who has not yet left England ; secondly, for the martial negotiation and adjustment of the dispute ; thirdly, for the homeward despatch of the results — we cannot anticipate any secure settlement of the case.

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## NOTE 4. Page 148.

The Americans did quite enough for committing themselves to the same policy as ourselves, but also (I fear) not enough to satisfy the claims of their national honor, as it is likely to be interpreted at Washington by Congress and by the President's Council. For, as is remarked, with an evanescent sneer, by a British naval officer, although battering to rags a goodly number of forts, &c., they compromised matters obscurely with Yeh, after failing to obtain those indemnities, and, above all, those guarantees, which they had originally proclaimed as their objects.

## NOTE 5. Page 150.

It is asserted by philosophic travellers more than one, that not any great city throughout the greater part of the East is placed where naturally it ought to have been ; and why ? Simply out of deference to the sister folly of seeking fortunate *sites*. Good sense pointed out one site ; but divination and magical tricks stepped in to prescribe some other. Even our ambassador in Persia has been stopped, sometimes at the gates of Teheran, &c., that his horse's feet might be timed into perfect coincidence with the suggestions of astrology.

## NOTE 6. Page 155.

But Sir J. Davis, or else Mr. Fortune it is, who remarks, that instead of counting a *le* as one-third of an English mile, more often it would be fair to regard it as a fourth, or sometimes even as a fifth of a mile. However, in this case, *thirty miles* is the consul's own valuation.

## NOTE 7. Page 156.

The natural hydraulics of the river system in China threatens a vast section of this country with ruin ; and the ruin is drawing nearer every year. One main cause lies in the constitution of the Yellow River (the second in rank among the Chinese rivers), which brings down continually vast bodies of mud, much of which is not carried out to sea, but forms constant layers of depo-

sition, which have already raised the body of the water to such a height, that it is in a permanent condition of overflow, and at some seasons ruinously so. Shallows, on the other hand, arise in the artificial waters, from causes to which European science could apply remedies.

NOTE 8. Page 163.

“*Area* : ” — Not of a thousand miles square, which else the reader might be predisposed to think from the vast extent of China, but of a thousand square miles.

NOTE 9. Page 165.

“*To call* : ” — But begging pardon of the English Mr. Toots, whom we all know to be a kind-hearted and honorable man, for taking such a liberty with his respected name, even for a moment.

NOTE 10. Page 167.

This is amongst the commonest tricks of the Chinese government. When any European has been injured too deeply to admit of a blank denial, half-a-dollar is paid to some Chinese vagabond for personating the delinquent ; having been shown once or twice in a public place, he is then withdrawn to some distant station, for the assumed purpose of brigading him with other convicts working out their penal sentences, but in reality to fulfil the bargain by discharging him in a place where the transaction will escape all public notice. This infamous trick suggested the prudence of nominating, in cases affecting our own interests, some inspector to watch the infliction of the sentence. But to this there are various objections ; and Lord Palmerston suggested one additional objection, which is painfully insurmountable — namely, that under a cruel government we should be called on to witness (inferentially to sanction) torture.

NOTE 11. Page 168.

*Yang-tse-Keang* : — Such is the native designation of this mighty river, nearly three thousand miles long.

## NOTE 12. Page 173.

I do not know whether his very long (and not uninteresting) communication of three columns, in small type, may not even be an advertisement. But, assuredly, it is in no harmony with the decisive opinions of that journal. The writer adopts the signature of "Cathay." Now, this (an old name for the northern section of China, China to the north of the Great River, constantly used by writers of our Henry VIII. period, as, for example, Ariosto, who always speaks of Angelica as daughter to the Emperor of Cathay) may properly enough express antiquated doctrines on the subject of China. A superannuated name may appropriately symbolize a superannuated policy—the policy of submission on our part.

## NOTE 13. Page 175.

This honorable viceregal gentleman was here coining a double calumny—first, in pretending to have ground for representing the bodily wounds as fictions; secondly, as fictions meant to sustain a pecuniary claim for indemnity: whereas, no charge at all, great or small, was made for anything whatever, except for the watches, &c., violently torn from the persons of the missionaries; and by looking to the Blue-book ("Reports respecting Insults in China"), it will be seen that this charge was exceedingly moderate. In fact, it was important to let the mob know that they could not gain by robbery. Meantime, whilst circulating these calumnies in a quarter where he could not be met and contradicted, the viceroy was perfectly aware that the very same falsehood, calling the affair a *brawl* and an *affray*, had been already attempted and repelled in a lower region.

## NOTE 14. Page 178.

Lieutenant Holman, the blind traveller, reports an infamous trick of the authorities at Canton on this subject. In order to justify the exclusion of the British, they circulated at Peking (where no contradiction was possible) the vilest calumnies as to the habits of the British, charging them with indecencies in public of a character too shocking for public mention.

## NOTE 15. Page 178.

The writer under the signature of "Cathay" seems to rehearse with sympathy the furious reiterations of hatred to us by the Cantonese, and to fancy that the very *blindness* of this fury furnishes an argument for treating it with deference. But a just man, though occupying a neutral position, would find in this one feature of the murderous frenzy an adequate argument for resisting it. Had the people of Canton pleaded any reasons for their hatred, drawn from a real experience, they would have found some countenance, more or less, from the disinterested observer. But all men of good feeling recoil with disgust from a headlong *monomania* that glories in its own groundlessness.

## NOTE 16. Page 180.

Is the reader aware of the insufferable affronts which our countrymen have had to face daily at Canton? How would any of ourselves like this which follows—to be under a necessity, often once a-day, of passing outside of a city, and at the gate of this city to be taunted with our exclusion, in spite of the treaty: "You red-haired devil, dare not for your life enter here!" Then come derisive grimaces, and, at the same time, a peculiar chirping sound, which these fools suppose to be the characteristic utterance of demons. And, at the same time, the British man or woman, who is obliged to pass the gate, can make no effectual retort, and is aware that, on entering the town, at all times, whether in public peace or not, a frantic murderous assault will follow. Such insolence it may require no great philosophy to endure once or twice; but how, if you were summoned to the same scene of furious indignity through twenty-five years—and summoned to this by the basest of poltroons, who never stood for ten minutes before our troops, but fled like hares? What injuries do the Cantonese reproach us with? They can mention none: the real injury is, that we British are that nation who have dissipated forever the chimera, worshipped as an idol by China, that she is the supreme nation upon this earth.

## NOTE 17. Page 181.

The great mystery in the Chinese administration is, how it can happen that, amongst a variable body like the high mandarins, liable to sudden degradation and exile, with none of the stability attaching to hereditary nobles, any permanent conspiracy for the intercepting of light can prosper. And yet, manifestly, it *does*. Every event of our war with China was concealed from the emperor. As one gross instance, in 1841, when we had so posted our troops that Canton lay completely at our mercy, the governor, aware that the capture of Canton would resound through all China, was anxious to buy off this fate by a payment of six million dollars for the opium confiscated by Lin. This was accepted by us ; but so reported to the poor, foolish prince at Peking, that he published an exulting proclamation, saying that at length chastisement had overtaken us, and we had reaped the just reward of our enormous crimes. Thirty-six hours later he received a little despatch informing him of the ransom, which it was impossible to conceal, since it was to be paid out of his majesty's poor, exhausted treasury. Strange to say, the emperor detected no contradiction in these two despatches, and continued to believe himself victorious throughout the war, until he found us to be within a few marches of Peking, and another bill, eventually to be paid of fourteen million dollars. So profound a delusion assuredly never before rested on a ruler, that in most respects is an unlimited despot, even in respect to those who are thus inexplicably combining successfully to deceive him.

## NOTE 18. Page 182.

This American goes on to say, with great truth : "To send embassies is only to confirm him in a false superiority, and to give another precedent of refusal to be cited by his successor." So far the writer is reasonable ; otherwise, his views are vicious and irrelevant.

## NOTE 19. Page 186.

The bribery was practised under the orders of the East India Company. That great Company have, in their vast Indian em-

pire, been the benefactors of the human race. In China, on the other hand, they it is — they chiefly — who have ruined us. Not by acts only, and the whole stream of their policy, but by direct written injunctions, and general orders, and by special opposition to nobler counsels, they have authorized a cringing mode of tactics. Blind as bats even to their own instant pecuniary interests, they have resisted the employment, in any Chinese case, of a king's officer, because he (said the Company) must support the national honor, which we (as commercial men) may disregard. That one fact shows the policy of the East India Directors.

NOTE 20. Page 187.

It is remarkable that Sir George Staunton, the very man to whose bold remonstrance, in 1816, we owe it that Lord Amherst refused the *ko-tou*, twenty years afterwards published a pamphlet against the admirable pamphlets of Messrs. Lindsay and Matheson, treating the idea of a military opposition to China, "with her countless millions," as "wild and desperate," and as mere "infatuation." Unfortunately for Sir George's reputation as a Chinese counsellor, the infatuated plan was actually tried four years later, and succeeded in the amplest extent. But would it not have seemed impossible beforehand that a man of sense should have gathered so little knowledge in fifty years of life, as to fancy mere brute numbers, without arms, without training, without discipline, and, above all, without food, at all formidable to the select soldiers of the earth? In this pamphlet, which really cancelled most of Sir George's earlier merits, he attempted even to varnish the monstrous arrogances of the Chinese emperor. He asserted (what he of all men should best have known to be untrue) that at least the emperor had never pretended to any rights over the island of Great Britain; whereas one of the official persons authorized by the Court of Peking to accompany Lord Amherst's return by land to Canton, had gravely reminded our people that the emperor was as truly lord of the British Isles as of Peking; and in this expostulation did not evidently suppose himself advancing any new truth, but simply recalling to our minds an old one, which we were forgetting. Sir George further insists,

that, even at the worst, the emperor went no further than our own kings, who, until the last alteration of the royal title, in the days of George III., always called themselves Kings of France. But how different the case ! We meant only Kings of France *de jure*, not *de facto*. And our original title rested upon a twofold real ground — namely, upon overwhelming victories, which enabled us to crown an infant prince as King of France ; and, secondly, upon plausible genealogical grounds. Besides that, we used the claim as only a peacock's feather of pomp, but never in the slightest instance attempted to assert any power over a French subject upon this basis. But the Chinese emperor never cited his pretended claim over Great Britain as less than a solid argument for demanding obedience to himself. And, in the mean time, China, having confessedly never sent any expedition whatever to Europe, could not even in a romance plead such a title.

NOTE 21. Page 187.

“ *Lord Napier :* ” — The immediate causes of the wrath shown to Lord Napier are still made the subject of dispute amongst all apologists for China, as though there had been an original irregularity in the commission of that ill-used nobleman. But, on comparing all the documents, it is plain that the true and sole ground of the brutality was the deadly fear that this change would lead to a transfer of all our commercial affairs from the hands of corrupt and irresponsible local officers to others of a higher class in immediate communication with Peking.

NOTE 22. Page 191.

I quote a sentiment of Wordsworth's in “ *The Excursion*,” but cannot remember its expression.

NOTE 23. Page 197.

“ *By repute :* ” — The crew of the Centurion were so persuaded that these treasure-galleons were impregnable to ordinary cannonballs, that the commodore found it advisable to reason with them, and such was their confidence in him, that upon his promise to

and a road into the ship if they would only lay him alongside of her, they unanimously voted the superstition a Spanish lie.

NOTE 24. Page 199.

*Can be no prince:*—In the technical heraldic usage, a duke in our peerage is styled a prince. But this book honor finds no acceptance or echo in the usage of life; not even in cases, like those of Marlborough and Wellington, where the dukes have received principedoms from foreign sovereigns, and might, under the sanction of their own sovereign, assume their continental honors.

NOTE 25. Page 200.

This tells favorably for Cromwell as an instance of fair and honorable nationality in one direction; and yet in the counter direction how ill it tells for his discernment, that, in forecasting a memoir on his own career for continental use, and therefore properly to be written in Latin, his thoughts turned (under some unaccountable bias) to continental writers, descending even to such a fellow as Meric Casaubon, the son, indeed, of an illustrious scholar, but himself a man of poor pretensions; and all the while this English-hearted Protector utterly overlooked his own immortal secretary.

NOTE 26. Page 202.

*“Impertinent:”*—That is, according to an old and approved parliamentary explanation, not pertinent, irrelevant.

NOTE 27. Page 204.

We may see by the recorded stratagem of an individual Greek, cunning enough, but, on the other hand, not at all less base than that which he sought to escape, that these prostrations (to which Euripides alludes with such lyrical and impassioned scorn, in a chorus of his “Orestes,” as fitted only for Phrygian slaves) must have been exacted from all Greeks alike, as the *sine qua non* for admission to the royal presence. Some Spartan it was, already slavish enough by his training, who tried the artifice of dropping



a ring, and affecting to pass off his prostrations as simply so many efforts to search for and to recover his ring. But to the feelings of any honorable man, this stratagem would not avail him. One baseness cannot be evaded by another. The anecdote is useful, however ; for this picturesque case, combined with others, satisfactorily proves that the sons of Greece could and did submit to the *ko-tou* for the furtherance of what seemed to them an adequate purpose. Had newspapers existed in those days, this self-degradation would have purchased more infamy in Greece than benefit in Persia. The attempted evasion by this miserable Greek, who sought to have the benefits of the *ko-tou* without paying its price, — thinking, in fact, that honor could be saved by swindling, — seems on a level with that baseness ascribed (untruly, it may be hoped) to Galileo, whom some persons represent as seeking to evade his own formal recantation of the doctrine as to the earth's motion, by muttering inaudibly, “ But it *does* move, for all that.” This would have been the trick of the Grecian ring-dropper.

NOTE 28. Page 211.

There seems to have been a strange blunder at the bottom of all our diplomatic approaches to the Court of China, if we are to believe what the lexicographers tell us, — namely, that the very word in Chinese which we translate ambassador means *tribute-bearer*. If this should be true, it will follow that we have all along been supposed to approach the emperor in a character of which the meaning and obligations were well known to us, but which we had haughtily resolved to violate. There is, besides, another consideration which calls upon us to investigate this subject. It would certainly be a ludicrous discovery if it should be found that we and the Chinese have been at cross-purposes for so long a time. Yet such things *have* occurred, and in the East are peculiarly likely to occur, so radically incompatible is our high civilization with their rude barbarism ; and precisely out of this barbarism grows the very consideration we have adverted to as laying an arrest upon all that else we should have a right to think. It is this : so mean and unrefined are the notions of oriental nations, that, according to those, it is very doubtful indeed

whether an eastern potentate would be able to understand or figure to himself any business, or office, belonging to an ambassador, except that of declaring war and defiance ; or, secondly, of humbly bringing tribute ! Hence, we presume, arises the Chinese rigor in demanding to know the substance of any letter before admitting the bearer of it to the imperial presence ; since, if it should happen to contain a defiance, in that case they presume that the messenger might indulge himself in insolence ; and this it might not be safe to punish in any nation where the sanctity of heralds still lingers, and a faith in the mysterious perils overtaking all who violate that sanctity. Wherever there are but two categories — war and tributary submission — into which the idea of ambassador subdivides, then it must be difficult for the Chinese to understand in which it is that we mean to present ourselves at Peking.

## NOTE 29. Page 214.

In the twenty-sixth Regiment alone eight hundred men died. This, it is true, was chiefly at Hong-Kong ; but the disease was mysterious ; for the *stationary* inhabitants of Hong-Kong did not die. Is it not therefore open to reasonable conjecture that the men had swallowed a slow poison ?

## NOTE 30. Page 215.

“ *Suicides by the thousand :* ” — The Chinese, amongst our antagonists, did not commit suicide when routed ; the Tartars did. But it is a point still unsettled whether this act were regarded by them as a measure of unavoidable desperation, under their anticipation of a death possibly cruel, but if not, a degrading vassalage at the hands of their conquerors ; or whether, even if made aware of our merciful usages, they would not still have held their *sacramentum militare* — the faith which they had pledged to their wicked emperor — paramount in obligation to any release, howsoever framed or worded by us, from the penalties of their condition as captives. There is, however, ground for a reasonable presumption that the Tartars generally, whom as brave men our army universally respected, would not have refused

quarter if it had been fully explained to them, nor would, in that case, have felt suicide a duty ; because those among them whom wounds and helplessness had disabled from attempting suicide, were deeply and pathetically impressed by the tenderness of their treatment in our hospitals, and even more so by the parting marks of respect which they received on their discharge.

NOTE 31. Page 215.

“ *Affecting at most two men, perhaps one :* ” — And this “ one ” challenged upon these two worshipful grounds : first, that he had something “ red ” in a part of his dress — so much went for little even in China ; but then, secondly, he had lost one (or by'r lady it might be two) of his front teeth, but whether in the upper jaw or in the lower, the witness did not specify.

NOTE 32. Page 216.

“ *Proceedings of Her Majesty's Naval Forces at Canton.* ”

NOTE 33. Page 217.

“ *Expiry of the License :* ” — It is remarkable enough that Lord Clarendon, whose long practice in the art of reading state-papers must have qualified him so eminently for moving with rapidity and with steadiness amongst the accumulated documents of Hong-Kong, might almost seem to have foreseen the blunder of Lord Derby. Writing from the Foreign Office on December 10, 1856, and reviewing all the papers connected with the Arrow that could then have reached him by the overland mail, coming down to October 15, Lord Clarendon says that he has consulted the law-officer of the crown, and has come to the conclusion that this act of the Chinese authorities constitutes an infraction of Art. IX. of the Supplementary Treaty. Yet, whilst saying this, he adds, as a part of the very same despatch, pretty nearly that very identical remark of Sir J. Bowring, which Lord Derby fancies to be nothing less than a confidential retraction of the whole charge against the Chinese. Here are Lord Clarendon's words : “ The expiration of the Arrow's sailing license on September 27,

previous to her seizure, does not appear to have been known to the Chinese authorities." What then? Does he mean that this might ultimately weaken our claim for reparation, as giving us a present and momentary advantage which would melt away as the truth became gradually more apparent? Not at all. So far from this, he means to say that Yeh does not appear to have known the one sole fact, which, *if* known, might, under an erroneous construction, have seemed to authorize, or colorably to palliate, his outrage; and Lord Clarendon, it must be remembered, is not giving this opinion under any suspicion of partisanship, as would have been the case had he been speaking in the House of Lords, but under the most solemn seal of public duty, as a minister of state writing confidentially to responsible agents.

NOTE 34. Page 221.

"*Prepared to rebel:*" — It deserves notice, however, that in China there is a *permanent* opening for rebels — both word and thing — in the condition of society. Besides the "Christian" rebels, the formidable Tae-pings, who have kept open for half-a-dozen years the cause of insurrection in the interior (sometimes in the very centre) of the empire, there has always been a smouldering rebellion — first, amongst the *triads*; secondly, amongst the eastern *maritime* populations, tainted with the leaven of piracy, and scornfully disaffected to the supreme government, as too notoriously not able to protect them; thirdly, amongst an old indigenous race of mountaineers, called the *Meaoutsee* (whether Chinese originally by blood is unknown), who, having long since found out the trick of cudgelling the Chinese, are not likely to unlearn it amongst the advantageous positions of their native hills and mountain-passes. John Chinaman from the plains below is continually opening a new chapter of the eternal row with these people; which being reported to Peking, in the old mendacious fashion, and discounted accordingly by the emperor, do not leave any large balance of victory to receive at the end of the year: no burden arises for the Peking memory. During our own war with the Chinese of 1841-2, a very natural fancy occurred to the Cabinet of Peking — namely, to hire these old

enemies in the stage character of new friends. Fighting so well as nuisances, why not as allies? But unhappily the plan failed. Ranged against the British, the stout mountaineers "went the way of all flesh."

NOTE 35. Page 223.

His Excellency in his hurry is excusably unprecise. What Sir John means is the withdrawal into the city of Canton, so as to be available against the British, of the troops appointed to the general defence of the vast province bearing the same name.

NOTE 36. Page 224.

"*Two separate bribes:*" — Yeh, the governor, first of all, offered by proclamation, upon the 27th of October, the sum of thirty dollars for the head of every Englishman; and subsequently a private association of persons in Canton, whom we dignify with the titles of "gentry" and "literati," offered a second bribe, larger by more than one-half — namely, thirty-three taels. A tael is precisely the old English *noble*, or 6s. 8d.; whence comes our ordinary law-solicitor's fee. Three taels, therefore, at the ordinary exchange, make one pound sterling. Consequently, Yeh's price for an English head is about six pounds or guineas; but the literati are more liberal, and offer pretty nearly to a fraction ten guineas.

NOTE 37. Page 224.

Since then the crew and passengers of the Thistle steamer, eleven in number, and others.

NOTE 38. Page 227.

"*Eleven times larger:*" — Confining the estimate, of course, to China Proper; else China beyond the Wall counts a total of three millicn square English miles.

NOTE 39. Page 227.

This panic was in itself a most memorable and scenical display, — perhaps the finest as a poetic vision that homely China has ever witnessed; for in China there is no magnificence of any

sort. Since the siege of Jerusalem, there has been nothing like the terror-stricken packing up of the court at Peking, after it became known that the English army occupied the head of the imperial canal. Had our horse-guards been present at headquarters, we should have caught and amputated more bushels of pigtailed than Hannibal of equestrian gold rings at Cannæ. But the comedy of the case really rises to the sublime, when the fact transpires, that, what between the knavery and the panic of the court, there disappeared from the treasure-chests of the emperor, during the headlong process of packing up, three millions of money; not *taels* observe, — three millions of which would unhappily make only one million of sovereigns, — but three downright sterling millions. What was to be done? Horror turned the emperor's head grass-green in one night. But what good would that do? Verdant hair would not bring back the departed money. Nothing would bring it back. Hitherto there had been no national debt in China; but from this night forward there was. Taoukwang, first and last, ordained that the three millions should be funded, and stand as a debt against the names to the thousandth generation of those who should have guarded the money, but certainly did *not*, and probably stole it. Meantime the emperor could not cash a bill for ten pounds; and in his journey to Mantchoo Tartary, had it held, he must have gone upon tick with his postilions: which might have brought his green hair with sorrow to the grave.

## NOTE 40. Page 233.

“*Warlike proceedings:*” — But not, therefore, to any bombardment of Canton, meaning the dwelling-houses and shops of that city, which is a pure fiction of the Cobdenites. No bombardment has yet taken place, but one directed against the cincture of walls around Canton — walls which are surmounted or surmountable with guns. But assume even that a general bombardment of the city *had* been found necessary, for the mastering of its foolish governor's obstinacy, what more would *that* have been than we have many times adopted against far more meritorious places, or than we had actually made final preparations to

carry out against this very Canton in the year 1841, as the one sole available resource for extorting a most equitable indemnity to our injured merchants.

NOTE 41. Page 237.

M. De Lange. He was left by M. De Ismaeloff, and was personally known to the Scottish traveller, Bell of Antermoney. Bell was a favorite and an agent of the Czar Peter the Great ; and after the czar's death he reprinted De Lange's Record as a supplement to his own Travels. But it had been printed previously in a separate form, and somewhat differently in parts, at the Hague, if not at Stockholm. Some seventy years after this abortive residence of De Lange, the Russians made another effort, of which no memorial has been printed.

NOTE 42. Page 238.

"*Twenty-five-thousand-mile voyage*:" — That is, outward and homeward.

NOTE 43. Page 241.

A ludicrous incident occurred under this blunder at Amoy : an American frigate, on coming into the harbor, saluted our shipping ; on which the Chinese notified by expresses that the barbarians were now hard at work against each other.

NOTE 44. Page 244.

Rokh Mirza, a splendid prince, presented to one of the former Chinese emperors a splendid horse. In China there are no horses that an English farmer's wife, carrying poultry to market, would condescend to mount. Consequently, in China there are no horsemen. The emperor was no better in this accomplishment than the rest of his subjects. Upon mounting, he was instantly thrown. No anger burns so fiercely as that which is kindled by panic. The emperor, therefore, I believe, regarded the horse as an assassin, but certainly the ambassadors who brought him ; and with great difficulty was prevailed on to spare their lives.

## TRADITIONS OF THE RABBINS.

[1833.]

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THE chief portion of the Rabbinical fantasies is derived from Indian fables; and among those the transmigration of souls seems to have made the most powerful impression. It is singular that this doctrine, utterly unsupported as it is by any approach to evidence, should have yet prevailed among a vast multitude, or rather the great majority, of ancient mankind; and the question is still dubious to which of the three most learned and investigating nations of antiquity the doctrine is first due. It belonged at once to India, Egypt, and Greece. Yet its origin may probably be traced to India, and there to some of those corruptions of the primal revelation, and of the second birth of mankind, the spirit transmitted from the antediluvian race into the descendants of Noah, the representative of the first man, and beginner of a new patriarchal line. The doctrine, too, served the purpose of offering an apparent explanation of that mysterious Providence by which the guilty sometimes exhibit striking examples of prosperity. It further gave some equally obscure hope of an explanation of the uses, partial sufferings, and



general degradation of the lower animal creation. The transfer of the soul of a tyrant to the body of a tiger seemed not unnatural; of the glutton's to the hog, or the robber's to the wolf, the vulture, or the hyena; all displayed a species of natural justice which might gradually render the transmigration probable to the quick and figurative fancies of the East. Their style of expression, too, the forms and emblems by which, in the early rudeness of penmanship, they labored to describe moral and mental qualities, tended to reënforce the doctrine. The outline of a dog expressed the persevering or the faithful, the lion characterized the bold, or the eagle gave the natural conception of lofty aspirings and indomitable ardor. For this doctrine the Rabbinical name is *Gilgul Neshameth* (the revolving of souls).

But the Rabbins sometimes deform the poetical part of this conception by their absurd habits of *particularizing*. In the *Nishmeth Chajim* we are thus told that the soul of the man who transgresses by attempting to provoke another to anger, passes inevitably into a beast. Those who were engaged in the rebellion at the building of Babel were punished by three judgments. The best among them were punished by the confusion of tongues. The second rank, or those who attempted to set up the idol, were sent to inhabit cats and monkeys. The third, more ambitious and more impious, who attempted to scale the heavens and assault the divine throne with earthly weapons, were flung down from their height, and transformed into evil spirits, whose torment is, to be always in restless and agonizing motion. A prevail-

ing cabalistic doctrine is the transmigration of the human spirit into cattle. But this depends on the degree of guilt. "If he hath committed one sin more than the number of his good works," he must undergo transmigration. The soul of the man who thinks on his good works is the more fortunate; for, though he must undergo the degradation of passing into the form of a beast, yet it is of a clean or ruminant one. But the soul of the profligate, or the shedder of blood, passes into an unclean beast, the camel, the rabbit, or the hog. The sensualist is generally condemned to the form of a reptile.

Rabbinism has continued full of trivial observances; and the Jew of the present day is harassed with a weight of ceremonies, which exceed the heaviest burdens of the ancient law. This yoke he has laid upon himself. A rigor, worthy of the Pharisee, is exercised in minute and perpetual triflings worthy of a child. One of those ordinances which pass through every portion of Jewish society, relates to the smoothness of their knife-blades. The knife with which the Jew puts bird or beast to death must be without jags or notches of any kind. The *Avodath Hakodesh* assigns the important reason: "Sometimes the soul of a righteous man is found in a clean beast or fowl. The Jews are therefore commanded to have their killing-knives without notches, to the end that they may give as little pain as possible to the souls contained therein."

The treatise *Ginek Hammelech* gives the following instance of the penal effect of the transmigration as detailed by the Rabbi Mosche Gallante, chief judge

of Jerusalem : “ When, in the first ages of Israel, the Rabbi Isaac Lurja — blessed be his memory ! — was passing through the Holy Land, he came faint and weary to a grove of olives, and there laid him down. He said to the Rabbi Mosche, ‘ Here let us rest ; ’ but the Rabbi would not, for he looked round, and the place whereon they lay was a grave of the wicked. But the Rabbi Isaac, pointing to a tree above, on which sat a raven loudly croaking, said, ‘ There is no spirit in this grave. Dost thou not remember Nismath, the extortioner of the city ? ’ — ‘ I remember him well,’ answered the Rabbi Mosche ; ‘ he was the grand collector of the customs, and was cursed every day he lived for his cruelty. He robbed the rich, and he trampled on the poor ; the old he deprived of their property, and the young of their inheritance. May his name be black as night, and his memory be buried deep as the bottom of the sea.’ — ‘ He is sorry enough now for his oppression,’ said the Rabbi Isaac Lurja. ‘ The King of Judgment hath sentenced his evil soul to be imprisoned in the body of that raven, and its complainings are its sorrows for its state, and its supplications to me to pray for its release.’ — ‘ And wilt thou pray for the son of evil ? ’ asked the Rabbi Mosche. — ‘ Sooner will I pray that this staff be the serpent of the magician,’ answered Rabbi Isaac ; and, thereupon rising, he flung it at the raven, which, with a yell of fury, waved its wings, and shot up in agony into the bosom of the clouds.”

But, even in its original state, the soul, according to the Rabbins, is under a multiform shape. They

hold that the human soul has no less than five different forms or stages. "The first is the *Nephesh*, the bodily soul. The second is the *Ruach*, the spirit. The third is the *Neshama*, the more celestial soul. The fourth, the *Chaja*, the life. The fifth is the *Jechida*, the solitary." And these divisions have their appropriate occasions and uses, every remarkable period of human existence requiring a due reinforcement of the soul, as a principle. "In the working and week days, between the new moon and the feast-day, thou must be content with having the *Nephesh*. On the Feast-day comes the *Ruach*. On the day of Atonement comes the *Neshama*. On the Sabbath comes the *Chaja*, or supernumerary soul, and in the final and future life of happiness comes the *Jechida*." The tenet that on the Sabbath man receives an additional soul, is established among the Rabbins. But the extravagance of those conceptions is occasionally qualified among the later commentators by the explanation that those diversities of the human spirit simply mean the gradual advance of the soul from excellence to excellence in the course of prayer, and the study of divine things.

By a singular improvement on the pagan doctrine of the metempsychosis, there is also a *reverse* change of bodies; and the spirit which had inhabited the form of a wild beast, becomes occasionally the inhabitant of the human shape. The tenet of the famous Rabbi Lurja, in the treatise *Ginek Hammelech*, is, that the violences and follies so conspicuous and unaccountable on human grounds, in certain individuals, are explained by this transmission. The

vulture, the panther, the jackal, the fox, transmit their spirits into men, and thence we obviously derive the gluttonous, the rapacious, the base, the crafty, the whole train of the profligate and the mischievous of mankind; the race whom no precept can guide, no fear can restrain, and no principle can regulate; the whole lineage of the desperate and impracticable among men.

Such are the doctrines in their ruder state. But they sometimes take a finer and more fanciful shape, and rise into the boldness and imagery of Oriental fiction. "What," says the *Shaar Aikkune*, "is the fall of the guiltiest of the guilty; of those who have made themselves abominable in the sight of earth and heaven; of those who have exulted in their sins; of the man who has slain a son of Israel; of the apostate who has denied the supremacy of the religion of Israel over all other religions on the earth; of the spy who has betrayed a Jew, or a community of Jews? Shall they ascend to heaven? shall they be worthy to plant their steps in the courts of the palaces of the angels? No; the angels are their punishers; they utter the sentence of ruin against them; they drive them downward, and summon a band of evil spirits to chase them round the world. The dark tormentors rush after them with goads and whips of fire; their chase is ceaseless; they hunt them from the plain to the mountain, from the mountain to the river, from the river to the ocean, from the ocean round the circle of the earth. Thus the tormented fly in terror, and the tormentors follow in vengeance, until the time decreed is done. Then the

doomed sink into dust and ashes. Another beginning of existence, the commencement of a second trial, awaits them. They become clay, they take the nature of the stone and of the mineral ; they are water, fire, air ; they roll in the thunder ; they float in the cloud ; they rush in the whirlwind. They change again. They enter into the shapes of the vegetable tribes ; they live in the shrub, the flower, and the tree. Ages on ages pass in their transformations ; they wither ; they are tossed by the tempest ; they are trampled by man ; they are smote by the axe ; they are consumed by fire. Another change comes ; they enter into the shape of the beast, the bird, the fish, the insect ; they traverse the desert, they destroy, and are destroyed ; they soar into the clouds ; they shoot through the depths of the ocean ; they burrow their invisible way through the recesses of the earth ; they come by devouring millions in the locust ; they sting in the scorpion ; they crumble away the roots of vegetation in the hosts of the ant ; they destroy the promise of the year in the caterpillar ; they drive the flocks and herds into famine and madness in the hornet and the fly zebib. They at last are suffered to ascend into the rank of human beings once more. Yet their ascent is step by step. They are first slaves ; they see their first light in the land of misery. The African or the Asiatic sun scorches them by day ; they are frozen with the dews of the night ; they live in perpetual toil ; their frames are lacerated with the scourge ; their steps clank with the chain ; their souls faint within them in hopeless misery, till they long to die. At last

they die, and again commence life in a higher rank ; they are now free, but they cultivate a sterile soil ; they are impoverished, trampled, tortured by tyrant rulers ; they are dragged to war by fierce ambition ; they are pursued, starved, ruined by furious war ; they are thrown into dungeons ; they are banished ; and, above all, their souls are degraded by the darkness of superstitions bathed in blood. They are bowed down to idols which they dread while they despise ; they repeat prayers to things which they know to be the work of men's hands, stocks and stones, which yet from infancy they have taught themselves to adore ; and thus drag on life in torture of mind, in shame, the twilight of truth, and the bewilderment of ignorance ; they worship with their lips, yet scorn with their hearts. But their scorn breaks forth ; they are grasped by power ; they resist ; they are dragged to the rack and the flame ; they are slain. The final change is now come. They are Israelites. They have risen into the first class of mankind ; they are of the chosen people ; the sons of Abraham, to whom has been given the promise of universal dominion. Joy to them unspeakable, if they hold their rank ; misery tenfold if they fall, for their fall now will be without redemption."

Those are the theories, and they bear evidence of that mixture of Greek philosophy and Asiatic invention, which forms the romance of the early ages. But they are sometimes embodied into narratives of singular imagination. The Thousand and One Nights are rivalled, and the Sultana Scheherazade might find

some of her originality thrown into the shade by those tales. The Widow of Hebron is an example.

“The Rabbi Joseph, the son of Jehoshaphat, had been praying from noon until the time of the going down of the sun, when a messenger from the chief of the Synagogue of Hebron came to him, and besought him to go forth and pray for a woman who was grievously tormented. The Rabbi, ever awake to the call of human sorrow, rose from his knees, girt his robe round him, and went forth. The messenger led him to a building deep in the forest that grew on the south side of the hill of Hebron. The building had more the look of the palace of one of the princes of Israel than of a private dwelling. But if its exterior struck the gaze of the Rabbi, its apartments excited his astonishment. He passed through a succession of halls worthy of the days of the first Herod, when Jerusalem raised her head again after the ruin of Antiochus, when her long civil wars were past, and she had become once more the most magnificent city of the eastern world. Marble columns, silken veils suspended from the capitals of the pillars, tissues wrought with the embroidery of Sidon, and colored with the incomparable dyes of Cæsarea, vases of Armenian crystal, and tables of Grecian mosaic, filled chambers, in which were trains of attendants of every climate, Ethiopian, Indian, Persian, and Greek, all habited in the richest dresses. All that met the eye wore an air of the most sumptuous and habitual magnificence.

“The Rabbi, however, had but a short time for wonder, before he was summoned to the chamber of the



sick person. But all the costliness that he had seen before was eclipsed by the singular brilliancy of this apartment ; it was small, and evidently contrived for the secluded hours of an individual ; but everything was sumptuous, all gold or pearl, amber or lapis-lazuli. And in the midst of this pomp, reclined, half-sitting, half-lying, on huge pillows of Shiraz silk, a female, whose beauty, in all the languor of pain, riveted even the ancient eye of the pious Rabbi. The sufferer was young ; but the flush that from time to time broke across her countenance, and then left it to the paleness of the grave, showed that she was on the verge of the tomb. The Rabbi was famous for his knowledge of herbs and minerals, and he offered her some of those medicaments which he had found useful in arresting the progress of decay. The dying beauty thanked him, and said in a faint voice that she had implored his coming, not to be cured of a disease which she knew to be fatal, but to disburden her mind of a secret which had already hung heavy on her, and which must extinguish her existence before the morn. The Rabbi, on hearing this, besought her to make him the depositary of her sorrow, if he could serve her ; but, if he could not, forbade her to tell him what might hang darkly on the memory of a man of Israel. 'I am the daughter,' said she, 'of your friend the Rabbi Ben Bechai, whose memory be blessed, but the widow of a prince, the descendant of Ishmael. You see the riches in this house ; but they are not the riches of the sons of the Desert. They were desperately gained, bitterly enjoyed, and now they are repented of when

it is too late.' As the lovely being spoke, her countenance changed; she suddenly writhed and tossed with pain, and in her agony cried out words that pierced the holy man's ears with terror. He cast his eyes on the ground, and prayed, and was strengthened. But when he looked up again, an extraordinary change had come upon the woman's countenance. Its paleness was gone, her cheeks were burning, her hollow eyes were darting strange light; her lips, which had been thin and faded as the falling leaf, were full, crimson, and quivering with wild passion and magic energy. The Rabbi could not believe that he saw the dying woman by whose side he had so lately knelt, in the fierce and bold, yet still beautiful creature, that now gazed full and fearless upon him. 'You see me now,' said she, 'with surprise; but these are the common changes of my suffering. The deadly disease, that is sinking me to the dust, thus varies its torment hour by hour; but I must submit and suffer.' The Rabbi knew by those words that the woman was tormented with an evil spirit. Upon this he sent for a famous unction, which had been handed down to him from his ancestor the Rabbi Joseph, who had been physician to King Herod the Great, and had exorcised the evil spirit out of the dying king. On its being brought, he anointed the forehead of the woman, her eyes, and the tips of her fingers. He then made a fire of citron-wood and cinnamon, and threw on it incense. As the smoke arose, he bowed her head gently over it, that she might imbibe the odor in her nostrils, which was an established way of expelling the evil spirit.

“The woman’s countenance now changed again; it was once more pale with pain, and she cried out in her torment; at length in strong agony she uttered many words. But the Rabbi perceived, from her fixed eyes and motionless lips, that it was the spirit within her that spoke the words. It said, ‘Why am I to be disturbed with anointings and incense? Why am I to hear the sound of prayer, and be smitten with the voice of the holy? Look round the chamber. Is it not full of us and our punishers? Are we not pursued forever by the avenging angels? Do they not hold scourges of fire in their hands, and fill every wound they make with thrice-distilled poison of the tree Asgard, that grows by the lake of fire? I was an Egyptian; five hundred years ago I lived at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus. I longed for power, and I obtained it; I longed to possess the fairest daughters of the land, and I possessed them. I longed for riches, and I practised all evil to gain them. I was at length accused before the king of sorcery. I longed for revenge on my accuser, and I enjoyed my revenge. I stabbed him as he was sleeping in his chamber. The murder was known; I was forced to fly. But I first sent a present of perfumed cakes of Damascus to the mistress of the man who made the discovery; they feasted on them together, and together they died. The ship in which I fled was overtaken by a storm. I was charged with having brought the anger of heaven on the vessel. I was seized, and about to be slain. I drove my dagger through the captain, sprang overboard, and reached the shore. From it,

in triumphant revenge, I saw the ship and all the crew perish in the waters. I was now in the Great Desert of Africa; and was starving and scorched, until I lay down to die. But at the last moment an old man came from among the tombs, and offered me bread and water. I followed him to his dwelling in the tombs. He scoffed at my complaints of ill-fortune, and swore to place me once again at the height of my wishes, if I would be ready at his call at the end of a hundred years. I could have then drunk fire and blood in my fury against mankind, and my thirst of possession. I swore to be his, and prepared to begin my hundred years of enjoyment.

“I returned to Egypt. I had been supposed to have sunk to the bottom of the waters with the wreck of the vessel. My countenance was no longer the same. No man remembered me. I began my career. I was full of wild ambition, eager desire, and matchless sagacity. I rapidly outstripped all rivalry. I rose to the first rank under the Ptolemies. I enjoyed the delight of ruining every man who had formerly thwarted me. All Egypt rang with my fame. I had secret enemies, and strange rumors of the means of my perpetual success began to be spread. But I had spies everywhere; a whisper was repaid by death. A frown was avenged like an open accusation. My name became a universal terror. But I had my followers and flatterers only the more. I trampled on mankind. I revelled in seeing the proud grovelling at my feet. I corrupted the lowly, I terrified the high, I bound the strong to my basest services. I was hated and cursed, but I was feared

Daggers, poison, secret rage, and public abhorrence, all were levelled against me ; I encountered them all, defied them all, challenged and triumphed over them all. I was the most successful, the most envied, and the most wretched of human beings. But my passions at length changed their color ; I had lost all sense of enjoyment ; habit had worn its sense away ; the feast, rank, splendor, the adulation of the great, the beauty of woman, all had grown tasteless and wearisome. Life was withering. But I had a fierce enjoyment still, and one that grew keener with the advance of years. I rejoiced in the degradation of my fellow-men. I revelled in corrupting the mercenary, in hardening the ferocious, in inflaming the vindictive, in stimulating the violent. I lived, too, in an evil time of the monarchy. Desperate excesses in the court were all but rivalled by furious vice in the people. The old age of the Greek dynasty was a sinking of the soul and body of dominion together. The deepest sensuality, the wildest waste of public wealth, the meanest extortion, the most reckless tyranny, all that could fester the memory of a nation, were the daily crimes of the decaying court of the Ptolemies. I had come at the right time. Invested with power which made the monarch a cipher, I exulted in the coming ruin—I blinded the eyes of this voluptuous tyranny to its inevitable fate—I had but little to do in urging it to new crime, but I did that little. I wove round it a web of temptation that the strength even of virtue could have scarcely broken, but into which the eager dissoluteness of the Egyptian court plunged as if it had been the most

signal gift of fortune. I exulted in the prospect of my accomplished task of precipitating a guilty palace and people into utter ruin ; but in the fever of my exultation I had forgot that my time was measured. At a banquet in the king's chamber I saw a guest whose face struck me as having been known to me at some remote period. He was the chieftain of one of the Bactrian tribes, who now came to offer compensation for some outrages of his wild horsemen on a caravan returning from the Indus to Egypt. He was a man of marvellous age, the signs of which he bore in his visage, but of the most singular sagacity. His reputation had gone forth among the people ; and all the dealers in forbidden arts, the magi, the soothsayers, and the consulters of the dead, acknowledged their skill outdone by this exhausted and decrepit barbarian. The first glance of his keen eye awoke me to strange and fearful remembrances, but his first word put an end to all doubt, and made me feel the agonies of despair. At the sound of his voice I recognized the old man of the tombs, and felt that the terrible time for his payment was come. It was true, I was to die—I was to suffer for the long banquet of life—I was to undergo the torture of the place of all torture—I was to suffer a hideous retribution for the days of my triumph. They had been many, but they now seemed to me but a moment. Days, months, years, were compressed into a thought, and I groaned within my inmost soul at the frenzy which had bound me to a master so soon to demand the penalty to the uttermost.

“ ‘I flew from the royal chamber ; my mind was a

whirl of terror, shame, loathing, hatred, and remorse. I seized my sword, and was about to plunge it into my heart, and end a suspense more stinging than despair, when I found my hand arrested, and, on turning, saw the visage of the Bactrian. I indignantly attempted to wrest the sword from him, and drive it home to a heart burning with the poison of the soul. But he held it with a grasp to which my utmost strength was a child's. I might as well have forced a rock from its base. He smiled, and said, "I am Sammael. You should have known, that to resist me was as absurd as to expect pity from our race. I am one of the princes of evil—I reign over the south-east—I fill the Bactrian deserts with rapine, the Persian chambers with profligacy, and am now come to fling the firebrands of civil war into this court of effeminate Asiatics, savage Africans, and treacherous Greeks. The work was nearly done without me; but Sammael must not let the wickedness of man triumph alone. He tempts, ensnares, betrays, and he must have his reward like mankind. This kingdom will soon be a deluge of blood where it is not a deluge of conflagration, and a deluge of conflagration where it is not a deluge of blood." As he spoke his countenance grew fiery, his voice became awful, and I fell at his feet without the power to struggle or to speak. He was on the point of plunging me through the crust of the earth ten thousand times ten thousand fathoms deep, below the roots of the ocean, to abide in the region of rack and flame. He had already lifted his heel to trample me down. But he paused, and uttered a groan. I saw a burst of

light that covered him from the head to the foot, and in which he writhed as if it had been a robe of venom. I looked up and saw a giant shape, one of the sons of Paradise who watch over the children of Israel, standing before the evil King. They fought for me with lances bright and swift as flashes of lightning. But Sammael was overthrown. He sprang from the ground, and, cursing, spread his wings and flew up into a passing thunder-cloud. The son of Paradise still stood over me with a countenance of wrath, and said, "Child of guilt, why shall not vengeance be wrought upon the guilty? Why shall not the subject of the evil one be stricken with his punishment, and be chained on the burning rocks of his dungeon, that are deep as the centre of the earth, and wide as its surface spread out ten thousand times?" I clasped his knees, and bathed them with tears; I groaned, and beat my bosom in the terrors of instant death. The bright vision still held the blow suspended, and saying "that I had been preserved from ruin only by being the descendant of an Israelitish mother, but that my life had earned punishment which must be undergone;" as he spoke the words, he laid his hand upon my forehead with a weight which seemed to crush my brain.

"I shrank and sprang away in fear; I rushed wildly through the palace, through the streets through the highways. I felt myself moving with a vigor of limb, and savage swiftness, that astonished me. On the way I overtook a troop of Alexandrian merchants going towards the desert of the Pentapolis. I felt a strange instinct to rush among them — I was



hungry and parched with thirst. I sprang among a group who had sat down beside one of the wells that border the sands. They all rose up at my sight with a hideous outcry. Some fled, some threw themselves down behind the shelter of the thickets, but some seized their swords and lances, and stood to defend themselves. I glowed with unaccountable rage; the sight of their defiance doubly inflamed me; the very gleam of their steel seemed to me the last insult, and I rushed forward to make them repent of their temerity. At the same instant I felt a sudden thrill of pain; a spear, thrown by a powerful hand, was quivering in my side. I bounded resistlessly on my assailant, and in another moment saw him lying in horrid mutilation at my feet. The rest instantly lost all courage at the sight, and, flinging down their weapons, scattered in all directions, crying for help. But those dastards were not worth pursuit. The well was before me, I was burning with thirst and fatigue, and I stooped down to drink of its pure and smooth water. What was my astonishment when I saw a lion stooping in the mirror of the well! I distinctly saw the shaggy mane, the huge bloodshot eyes, the rough and rapidly moving lips, the pointed tusks, and all red with recent gore. I shrank in strange perturbation. I returned to the well again, stooped to drink, and again saw the same furious monster stoop to its calm, blue mirror. A horrid thought crossed my mind. I had known the old doctrine of the Egyptians and Asiatics, which denounced punishment in the shape of brutes to the guilty dead. Had I shared this hideous punishment? I again gave

a glance at the water. The sight was now conviction. I no longer wondered at the wild outcry of the caravan, at the hurried defence, at the strange flight, at the ferocious joy with which I tore down my enemy, and trampled and rent him till he had lost all semblance of man. The punishment had come upon me. My fated spirit had left its human body, and had entered into the shape of the savage inhabitant of the wilderness. The thought was one of indescribable horror. I bounded away with furious speed, I tore up the sands, I darted my fangs into my own flesh, and sought for some respite from hideous thought in the violence of bodily pain. I flew along the limitless plains of the desert, from night till morning, and from morning till night, in hope to exhaust bitter memory by fatigue. All was in vain. I lay down to die, but the vast strength of my frame was proof against fatigue.

“I rushed from hill to valley with the speed of the whirlwind, and still I was but the terror of the wilderness, all whose tenants flew before me. I sought the verge of the little villages, where the natives hide their heads from the scorching sun and the deadly dews. I sought them, to perish by their arrows and lances. I was often wounded; I often carried away with me their barbed iron in my flesh. I often writhed in the agony of poisoned wounds. Still I lived. My life was the solitary existence of the wild beast. I hunted down the antelope, the boar, and the goat, and gorged upon their blood. I then slept, until hunger, or the cry of the hunter, roused me once more to commence the same career of flight, pursuit, watching, and wounds. This life

was hideous. With the savage instincts of the wild beast, I retained the bitter recollections of my earlier nature, and every hour was felt with the keenness of a punishment allotted by a Judge too powerful to be questioned, and too stern to be propitiated. How long I endured this state of evil, I had no means of knowing. I had lost the human faculty of measuring the flight of time. I howled in rage at the light of the moon as I roamed through the wilderness; I shrank from the broad blaze of the sun, which at once parched my blood and warned my prey of my approach; I felt the tempests of the furious season, which drove all the feebler animals from the face of the land to hide in caves and woods. I felt the renewed fires of the season when the sun broke through his clouds once more, and the earth, refreshed with the rains, began to be withered like the weed in the furnace. But, for all other purposes, the moon and the sun rose alike to my mind, embodied as it was in the brute, and sharing the narrowness and obscurity of the animal intellect. Months and years passed unnoted. In the remnant of understanding that was left to me in vengeance, I labored in vain to recount the periods of my savage suffering; but the periods of my human guilt were, by some strange visitation of wrath, always and instantly ready at my call. I there saw my whole career with a distinctness which seemed beyond all human memory. I lived over every hour, every thought, every passion, every pang. Then the instincts of my degraded state would seize me again; I was again the devourer, the insatiate drinker of blood, the terror

of the African, the ravager of the sheepfold, the monarch of the forest. But my life of horror seemed at length to approach its limit; I felt the gradual approach of decay. My eyes, once keen as the lightning, could no longer discern the prey on the edge of the horizon; my massive strength grew weary; my limbs, the perfection of muscular strength and activity, became ponderous, and bore me no longer with the lightness that had given the swiftest gazelle to my grasp. I shrank within my cavern, and was to be roused only by the hunger which I bore long after it had begun to gnaw me. One day I dragged out my tardy limbs, urged by famine to seize upon the buffaloes of a tribe passing across the desert. I sprang upon the leader of the herd, and had already dragged it to the earth, when the chieftain of the tribe rushed forward with his lance, and, uttering a loud outcry, I turned from the fallen buffalo to attack the hunter. But in that glance I saw an aspect which I remembered after the lapse of so many years of misery. The countenance of the being who had crushed me out of human nature was before me. I felt the powerful pressure: a pang new to me, a sting of human feeling, pierced through my frame. I dared not rush upon this strange avenger—I cowered in the dust—I would have licked his feet. My fury, my appetite for carnage, my ruthless delight in rending and devouring the helpless creatures of the wilderness, had passed away. I doubly loathed my degradation, and, if I could have uttered a human voice, I should at this moment have implored the being before me to plunge his spear into my brain,

and extinguish all consciousness at once. As the thought arose, I looked on him once more ; he was no longer the African ; he wore the grandeur and fearful majesty of Azrael. I knew the Angel of Judgment. Again he laid his grasp upon my front. Again I felt it like the weight of a thunderbolt. I bounded in agony from the plain, fell at his feet, and the sky, the earth, and the avenger, disappeared from my eyes.

“ ‘ When life returned to me again, I found that I was rushing forward with vast speed, but it was no longer the bound and spring of my sinewy limbs. I felt, too, that I was no longer treading the sands that had so long burned under my feet. I was tossed by winds ; I was drenched with heavy moisture ; I saw at intervals a strong glare of light bursting on me, and then suddenly obscured. My senses gradually cleared, and I became conscious that my being had undergone a new change. I glanced at my limbs, and saw them covered with plumage ; but the talons were still there. I still felt the fierce eagerness for blood, the instinctive desire of destroying life, the eagerness of pursuit, the savage spirit of loneliness. Still I was the sullen king of the forest ; in every impulse of my spirit I rushed on. As far as my eye could gaze, — and it now possessed a power of vision which seemed to give me the command of the earth, — I saw clouds rolling in huge piles as white as snow, and wilder than the surges of an uproused sea. I saw the marble pinnacles of mountains piercing through the vapory ocean like the points of lances ; I saw the whole majesty of the kingdom of the air,

with all its splendor of coloring, its gathering tempests, its boundless reservoirs of the rain, its fiery forges of the thunder. Still I rushed on, sustained by unconscious power, and filled with a fierce joy in my new strength. As I accidentally passed over a broad expanse of vapor, which lay calm and smooth under the meridian beams, I looked downwards. The speed of my shadow as it swept across the cloud, first caught my eye. But I was in another moment struck with still keener astonishment at the shape which fell there. It bore the complete outline of an eagle; I saw the broad wings, the strong form, the beak and head framed for rapine; the destruction of prey was in every movement. The truth flashed on me. My spirit had transmigrated into the king of the feathered race. My first sensations were of the deepest melancholy. I was to be a prisoner once more in the form of an inferior nature. I was still to be exiled from the communion of man. I was, for years or ages, to be a fierce and blood-devouring creature, the dweller among mountains and precipices, pursued by man, a terror to all the beings of its nature, stern, solitary, hated, and miserable. Yet I had glimpses of consolation. Though retaining the ruthless impulses of my forest state, I felt that my lot was now softened, that my fate was cast in a mould of higher capabilities of enjoyment, that I was safer from the incessant fears of pursuit, from the famine, the thirst, the wounds, and the inclemency of the life of the wilderness. I felt still a higher alleviation of my destiny in the sense that the very enjoyments, few and lonely as they were,

which were added to my existence, were proof that my captivity was not to be forever. The recollections of my human career still mingled with the keen and brute impulses of my present being; but they were no longer the scorpion scourges that had once tortured me. I remembered with what eager longing I had often looked upon the clear heavens of Egypt, and envied every bird that I saw soaring in the sunshine. I remembered how often, in even the most successful hours of my ambition, I had wished to exchange existence with the ibis that I had seen sporting over the banks of the Nile, and then spreading his speckled wings, and floating onward to the Thebais, at a height inaccessible to the arrow. How often had I gazed at the eagles which I started at the head of my hunting train from the country of the Cataracts, and while I watched their flight into the highest region of the blue and lovely atmosphere, saw their plumage turned to gold and purple as they rose through the colored light of the clouds, or poised themselves in the full radiance of the sunbeams! This delight was now fully within my possession, and I enjoyed it to the full. The mere faculty of motion is an indulgence; but to possess it without restraint; to have unlimited space before me for its exercise, and to traverse it without an exertion; to be able to speed with a swiftness surpassing all human rapidity; to speed through a world, and to speed with the simple wave of a wing,—was a new sense, a source of pleasure that alone might almost have soothed my calamity. The beauty of nature, the grandeur of the elemental changes, the contrasted

majesty of the mountains with the living and crowded luxuriance of the plains below, were perpetually before my eye ; and tardily as they impressed themselves on my spirit, and often as they were degraded and darkened by the necessities of my animal nature, they still made their impression. My better mind was beginning to revive. At length, one day as I lay on my poised pinions, basking in the sun, and wondering at the flood of radiance that from his orb illumined earth and heaven, I lamented, with almost the keenness of human regret, that I was destitute of the organs to make known to man the magnificence of the powers of creation, thus seen nigh, cloudless, and serene. In this contemplation I had forgotten that a tempest had been gathering in the horizon. It had rapidly advanced towards me. It enwrapped me before I had time to spread my pinions and escape from its overwhelming ruin. When I made the attempt, it was too late. I saw nothing before, below, or above me, but rolling volumes of vapor, which confused my vision and clogged my wings. Lightning began to shoot through the depths of the world of cloud. As I still struggled fiercely to extricate myself, I saw a shape standing in the heart of the storm. I knew the countenance. It was Azrael ; still awful, but with its earlier indignation gone. My strength sank and withered before him. My powerful pinion flagged. I waited the blow. It was mercy. I saw him stretch forth the fatal hand again. The lightning burst around me. I was enveloped in a whirlwind of fire, felt one wild pang, and felt no more.



“I awoke in the midst of a chamber filled with a crowd of wild-looking men and women, who, on seeing me open my eyes, could not suppress their wonder and joy. They danced about the chamber with all the gesticulations of barbarian delight. As I gazed round, with some hope or fear of seeing the mighty angel who had smote me, my gesture was mistaken for a desire to breathe the open air. I was carried towards a large casement, from which a view of the country spread before me. I was instantly, and for the first time, now sensible that another change had come upon me. Where were the vast volumes of clouds, on which I had floated in such supreme command? Where were the glittering pinnacles of the mountains, on which I had for so many years looked down from a height that made them dwindle into spear-heads and arrow-points? Where was that broad and golden splendor of the sun, on which I had for so many thousand days gazed, as if I drank new life from the lustre? I now saw before me only a deep and gloomy ravine, feathered with pines, and filled with a torrent that bounded from the marble summit of the precipice. The tops of the hills seemed to pierce the heavens, but they were a sheet of sullen forest; the sun was shut out, and but for a golden line that touched the ridge, I should have forgotten that he had an existence. I had left the region of lights and glories; I was now a wingless, powerless, earth-fixed thing, a helpless exile from the azure provinces of the sky. What I had become, I toiled in vain to discover. I was changed; I knew no more; my faculties still retained the

impressions made on them by long habit ; and I felt myself involuntarily attempting to spring forward, and launch again upon the bosom of the air. But I was at length to be fully acquainted with the truth.

“ ‘As the evening came on, I heard signals of horns and wild cries ; the sounds of many voices roused me, and, soon after, the women whom I had seen before, rushed into the chamber, bringing a variety of ornaments and robes, which they put on me. A mirror, which one of them held to my face when all was completed, showed me that I had transmigrated into the form of a young female. I was now the daughter of a Circassian chieftain. The being whose form I now possessed had been memorable for her beauty, was accordingly looked upon as a treasure by her parents, and destined to be sold to the most extravagant purchaser. But envy exists even in the mountains of Circassia ; and a dose of opium, administered by a rival beauty, had suddenly extinguished a bargain, which had been already far advanced, with an envoy from the royal harem of Persia. My parents were inconsolable, and they had torn their garments, and vowed revenge over me for three days. On this evening the horsemen of the whole tribe were to have assembled for an incursion upon the tribe of my successful rival, and to have avenged my death by general extermination. While all was in suspense, the light had come into the eyes of the dead beauty, the color had dawned on her cheeks, her lips had moved ; and her parents, in exultation at the hope of renewing their bargain, had at once given a general feast to their kinsmen, loaded

me with their family ornaments, and invited the Persian to renew his purchase, and carry me without delay beyond the chance of future doses of opium.

“ ‘The Persian came in full gallop, and approved of me for the possession of his long-bearded lord. My parents embraced me, wept over me, protested that I was the light of their eyes, and sold me without the slightest ceremony. That night I was packed up like a bale of Curdistan cloth, was flung on a horse, and carried far from the mountains of Circassia.

“ ‘At the Persian court I lived sumptuously, and in perpetual terror. I ate off dishes of gold, and slept on beds fringed with pearl, yet I envied the slave who swept the chamber. Everything around me was distrust, discontent, and treachery. My Persian lord was devoted to me for a month ; and, at the end of that time, I learned from an old female slave that I was to be poisoned, as my place was to be supplied by a new favorite, and it was contrary to the dignity of the court that I should be sold to a subject. My old friend further told me that the poison was to be administered in a pomegranate that night at supper, and mentioned by what mark I was to know the fatal fruit. On that night there was a banquet in the harem ; the monarch was beyond all custom courteous, and he repeatedly invited me to drink perfumed liquors, as the highest token of his regard, from his own table. At length, in a sportive tone, he ordered a dish of pomegranates from his favorite garden to be divided among the fairest of the fair of the harem. My heart sank within me, as I

heard the sentence of death. But I became only the more vigilant. The dish was brought. The fruits were flung by the monarch to his delighted guests, till at last but two remained. One of them, I saw, was the marked one. To have refused it, would have argued detection of the treachery, and must have been followed by certain death. At the moment when his hand touched it, I exclaimed that a scorpion had stung me, and fell on the floor in agony ! This produced a momentary confusion. The monarch dropped the fruit from his hand, and turned to summon assistance. Quick as the love of life could urge me, I darted towards the table, and changed the places of the two pomegranates. The confusion soon subsided, and I received from the hand of the Sofi the one which was now next to his royal touch. I bowed to the ground in gratitude, and tasted the fruit, which I praised as the most exquisite of all productions of the earth. The monarch, satisfied with his performance, now put the remaining one to his lips. I saw the royal epicure devour it to the last morsel, and observed the process without the least compunction ; he enjoyed it prodigiously. In the consciousness that he would not enjoy it long, I packed up every jewel and coin I could gather in my chamber the moment I left the banquet, desiring the old slave to bring me the earliest intelligence of the catastrophe. My labors were scarcely completed, when an uproar in the palace told me that my pomegranate was effectual. The old slave came flying in immediately after, saying that all the physicians of the city had been ordered to come to the Sofi's chamber ;

that he was in agony, and that there were "strong suspicions of his having been poisoned!" The old Nubian laughed excessively as she communicated her intelligence, and, at the same time, recommended my taking advantage of the tumult to escape. I lost no time, and we fled together.

"But, as I passed the windows of the royal chamber, I could not resist the impulse to see how his supper succeeded with him. Climbing on my old companion's shoulders, I looked in. He was surrounded by a crowd of physicians of all ranks and races, Jews and infidels, all offering their nostrums; and all answered by the most furious threats, that unless they recovered him before the night was over, the dawn should see every one of them without his head. He then raved at his own blunder, which he appeared to have found out in all points, and cursed the hour when he ate pomegranates for supper, and was outwitted by a woman. He then rolled in agony. I left him yelling, and heard him long after I had reached the boundaries of the harem garden. He died before he had time to cut off the physicians' heads. Before dawn he was with his forefathers.

"Through what changes of life I now ran, I remember but little more. All is confused before my eyes. I became the captive of a Bedoueen, fed his camels, moved the jealousy of the daughter of a neighboring robber, was carried off by his wild riders in consequence, and left to perish in the heart of the Hedjaz. From this horrible fate I was rescued, after days of wandering and famine, by a caravan which

had lost its way, and, by straying out of the right road, came to make prize of me. The conductor of the escort seized me as his property, fed me until I was in due fulness for the slave-market at Astrachan, and sold me to a travelling Indian dealer in Angora goats' hair and women. I was hurried to the borders of the Ganges, and consigned to the court of a mighty sovereign, black as ebony, and with the strongest resemblance to an overgrown baboon. I was next the sultana of a Rajahpoot. I was then the water-carrier of a Turcoman horse-stealer; I was the slave of a Roman matron at Constantinople, who famished and flogged me to make me a convert, and, when I at last owned the conversion, famished and flogged me to keep me to my duty. She died, and I was free from the scourge, the temple, and the dungeon. I have but one confession more to make. Can the ear of the holy son of Jehoshaphat, the wisest of the wise, listen to the compacts of the tempter?' The fair speaker paused; the Rabbi shrank at the words. But the dying penitent before him was no longer an object of either temptation or terror. He pressed his hands upon his bosom, bowed his head, and listened.

"The fainting beauty smiled, and taking from her locks a rich jewel, placed it on the hand of her hearer. 'My story is at an end,' said she. 'I had but one trial yet to undergo. The King of the Spirits of Evil urged me to deliver myself over to him. He promised me instant liberty, the breaking of my earthly chain, the elevation into the highest rank of earth, the enjoyment of riches beyond the treasures

of kings. The temptation was powerful ; the wealth which you now see round me, was brought by hands that might have controlled the elements ; but I had learned to resist all that dazzled the eye. Ambition was not for my sex, yet I might have at this hour ranked at the head of the race of woman ; a spell was within my power, by the simple uttering of which, I might have sat on a throne, the noblest throne at this hour upon earth. This, too, I resisted. But the more overwhelming temptation was at hand : the King of Evil stood before me in a garb of splendor inexpressible, and offered to make me the possessor of all the secrets of magic. He raised upon the earth visions of the most bewitching beauty ; he filled these halls with shapes of the most dazzling brightness ; he touched my eyes, and I saw the secrets of other worlds, the people of the stars, the grandeur of the mighty regions that spread above this cloudy dwelling and prison of man. The temptation was beyond all resistance. I was on the point of yielding, when I saw the Spirit of Evil suddenly writhe as if an arrow had shot through him ; his brightness instantly grew dim, his strength withered, and, even while I gazed, he sank into the earth. Where he had stood, I saw nothing but a foot-print, marked as if the soil had borne fire ; but another form arose. I knew Azrael ; his countenance had now lost all its terrors. He told me that my trials were come to their conclusion ; that, guilty as I was, my last allegiance to the tempter was broken ; that the decree had gone forth for my release, and that this night I was to inhabit a form of clay no more.' The

Rabbi listened in holy fear to the language of the wearied spirit, and for a while was absorbed in supplication. He then repeated the prayers for the dying hours of the daughters of Israel.

“ ‘It was for this that I summoned you, son of Jehoshaphat,’ said the sinking form. ‘It was to soothe my last hour on earth with the sounds of holy things, and to fill my dying ear with the wisdom of our fathers. So shall my chain be gently divided, and the hand of the angel of death lead me through the valley of darkness, without treading on the thorns of pain.’ The Rabbi knelt, and prayed more fervently. But he was roused by the deep sigh of the sufferer. ‘Now, pray for me no longer,’ were her words; ‘pray for the peace of Jerusalem.’ The Rabbi prayed for the restoration of Zion. As his prayer arose, he heard it echoed by voices of sweetness that sank into his soul. He looked upon the couch; the sufferer was dead; but the struggle of death had not disturbed a feature. She lay still lovely, and he knew that the fetter of the spirit had been loosed forever, and that the trial had been ended in mercy. He rose to call the attendants to watch by the dead, but the halls were empty. He then turned to the porch, and, pondering on the ways of destiny, set his face in awe and sorrow towards his own home. He looked back once more, but where was the porch through which he had so lately passed? Where was the stately mansion itself? All before the eye was the dim and yellow expanse of weeds that covers the foot of Hebron. He looked around him — he saw but the heathy sides of the hill, with



the city on its brow ; he looked below him — he saw but the endless range of fertile plain that is lost in the desert ; above him, all was the blue glory of midnight. The palace was air. Had he been in a trance ? Had he seen a vision ? Had a warning been given to him in a dream ? Who knoweth ? But is it not recorded in the book of the house of Jehoshaphat ; who shall tell ? Go, thou who readest, and learn wisdom. Are not all things dust and air ? ”

Some of the traditions allow a much more extensive transmigration. The treatise *Zohar* claims the privilege, or admits the punishment, for it may be either, of transmigrating no less than a thousand times ; on these grounds : When the great Judge causes the soul of a man to transmigrate, it is generally because it has not prospered, or done good, in its former state. It is then that the soul is torn from one existence and planted in the form of another ; and this is called the “ changing of the place.” On the third change, it receives a new appellative, and this is called the “ changing of the name.” A more marked stage is the alteration to a new form, with a consequent alteration of all the objects, pursuits, and faculties ; this is called the “ changing of the work.” But, “ how often,” asks the treatise, “ may those changes take place ? To one thousand times,” is the answer.

But this singular doctrine is urged still further, and is made to comprehend even the fallen angels. The treatise *Tuf haraez* declares that, as it is not the will of Providence that any Jew should be lost, and the command of circumcision was given to Abraham,

the resource of transmigration was devised for the assistance of those who might neglect that essential rite ; as thus, instead of being utterly cast forth, they were to be only temporarily separated from the chosen people, being sent to transmigrate through a series of bodies, until their due purification should be accomplished. Upon the discovery of this proviso, the treatise tells us that the fallen angels, conceiving themselves not much worse than an uncircumcised Jew, laid their claim to a similar privilege. Sammael and his seventy princes pleaded their cause, on the ground that as they were the work of creation not less than the sons of Abraham, they, fallen as they might be, deserved the same consideration. "For, what had Abraham done that he should be preferred to beings originally so much his superiors?" The answer was, that the patriarch's merits had entitled him to this privilege ; "that he had gone into the fire of the Chaldeans," to prove his zeal, which was more than Sammael and his seventy princes had ever thought of doing. The application was closed by a summary command that it should not be repeated. "Ye have not hallowed my words ; therefore speak no more, good or bad."

When we read those perversions of Scripture, which seem to be engendered of the most wilful ignorance, and the blindest infatuation, we may well account for the earnestness with which the apostolical writers warned the Christian world against the traditionary spirit of the Jews, against the "old wives' fables," the entangled genealogies, and the endless mysticism. We here have specimens of the

wisdom of the proud and stubborn generation which rejected the Messiah, and, with the oracles of divine truth in their hands, actually loved the false, the extravagant, and the trifling. We may well understand the force of the caution against "will worship," and prying into things of which no knowledge has been vouchsafed to man — the nature of angels, and the transactions of Heaven. We see here the fantastic humility, the uncalled-for mortification, the unauthorized homage to the living saints or the dead. It is not less palpable that the propensity to load scriptural truth with human inventions has been the characteristic of the corruption of Christianity, not less than of Judaism; and that Rome may vie, at this hour, in legendary extravagance, the worshiping of angels, the prayers for those spirits who are beyond all human intervention, the homage to the saints and martyrs, the useless and frivolous miracles, and the misty, fluctuating, and irreverent doctrines suggested for their support, with the wildest and most worthless fabrications of the Rabbins.

Like all Oriental writings on theology, the Rabbinical traditions discuss largely the glories, wonders, and delights of the future state. The Sacred Scriptures, written for higher purposes than curiosity, or the indulgence of an extravagant imagination, are nearly silent on the subject, probably from the double reason, that sufficient grounds are laid down for virtue without this detail of its rewards, and that human faculties are still but feebly fitted to comprehend the development, were it made. Yet even they are not without indications of the peculiar

species of happiness reserved for the immortal spirit. They give us statements of the temper in which Paradise will be enjoyed, the combination of love, gratitude, adoration, ardor of spirit, and activity of powers, which will constitute the purified nature ; and which, if it existed on earth, would make earth itself, with all its inclemencies of nature, and anxieties of circumstance, almost a Paradise. And, in those declarations, they exhibit the same wisdom, and the same sublime simplicity, which characterize the visible operations of Providence ; for they give us the principle of happiness, without embarrassing us with the details. They give us an incitement to the vigorous performance of our human duty, by suggesting a magnificent and various future, yet of which neither the magnificence is suffered to dazzle, nor the variety to distract, the mind.

But the famous treatise *Nishmath Chajim* settles all questions at once, according to the wisdom of the sons of Solomon. After announcing that there are seven regions, or dwellings, in the place of evil, for the punishment of the wicked, it cheers the true believer by telling him that Paradise is similarly partitioned, and equally large. The discovery is made in the form of a commission, directed by the Rabbi Gamaliel to the Rabbi Jehoscha ben Levi, a renowned name in the legendary world, for the purpose of deciding whether any of the *Gojim* (Gentiles, or Infidels) are in Paradise, and whether any of the children of Israel are in hell. The angel of death bears the commission to the Rabbi, and the Rabbi sets out immediately on his inquisition. The result of his

investigation is, that Paradise contains seven houses, or general receptacles for the blissful. Those houses are unquestionably adapted for a large population ; for each house is twelve times ten thousand miles long, and twelve times ten thousand miles broad, or one hundred and twenty thousand miles square. He then proceeds to report on their distinctions.

The first house fronts the first gate of Paradise, and is inhabited by converts from the Infidels, who have voluntarily embraced the Jewish faith. The walls are of glass, and the timbers cedar. He proposed to give accuracy to his statement by actually measuring the extent. But the converts, probably jealous of his superior sanctity, and conceiving that he was about to eject them, began to offer opposition. Fortunately, Obadiah the prophet, their superintendent saint, happening to be on the spot, he remonstrated with them, and the measurement was suffered to go on in peace. The second house fronts the second gate of Paradise. Its walls are of silver, and its beams cedar. It is inhabited by those who have repented, and they are superintended by a penitent : Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, is set over them. The third house is opposite to the third gate, is built of silver and gold, and is inhabited by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with all the Israelites who came out of Egypt, and all that were in the desert. In this house, also, dwell David, Solomon, and all the other sons of David, with the exception of Absalom. But those do not comprehend the whole habitancy of this well-stocked house. It contains, in addition, the whole succession of the kings of Judah, with

the exception of Manasseh, who, as we have already seen, is occupied in governing the second house. At the head of this dwelling are Moses and Aaron. The Rabbi now, observing that this household possessed a great quantity of handsome furniture, gold and silver plate, &c., and that the chambers were provided with beds, couches, and candlesticks of pearls and diamonds, asked David the purport of this opulence. "These," said David, "are for the children of the world from whom you came." The Rabbi then inquired whether any of the Gentiles, or of the children of Esau, were there. "None," was the answer. "Whatever good they may do, is rewarded in the world; but their natural destiny is hell." But every one who is wicked among the children of Israel is punished in his lifetime, but obtains the life to come; as it is written: "He repayeth those that hate him."

The fourth house fronts the fourth gate of Paradise, and is built, as the first man was framed, in perfection. It is built with oil-tree (olive) wood. But why is it thus built? Because the house is built for the habitation of the perfectly righteous, and their earthly days were bitter, like the oil-tree. The fifth house is built of silver, fine gold, glass, and crystal. The river Gihon flows through the midst of it. The framework is of gold and silver, with an odor far exceeding that of Lebanon wood. The couches are also more costly than those of the others; being formed of gold, silver, spice, and scarlet and blue silk, which was woven by Eve; and also crimson silk, and the finest linen, and cloth of goats' hair, which

was woven by angels. In this house dwell Messiah ben David, and Elias of blessed memory ; and to the chamber with pillars of silver, and carpets of scarlet, where Messiah especially dwells, with Elias perpetually declaring to him, "Be at ease ; for the end is at hand, when thou art to redeem Israel," Moses, Aaron, David, and Solomon, with the kings of Israel, and of the house of David, come on the second and fifth day of every week, and also on every Sabbath and festival, to lament with him, and comfort him, saying, "Be at ease, rely on Heaven, for the end is at hand."

But the fourth day of the week is reserved for a different assemblage. On this day, Korah and his company, with Dathan and Abiram, come to him, and ask, "When will be the end of what is wonderful ; and when shall we be raised from death, and suffered to come out of the abyss of the earth ?" And duly they hear the same scornful answer, "Go to your fathers and ask them." This answer is decisive : they are overwhelmed with shame, shrink, and disappear. Two houses remain ; but description has been exhausted, and they seem to be yet either inadequately finished, or inadequately filled. The sixth is for those who have rigidly walked in the path of the commandments ; the seventh for those who died, whether of sorrow for the national sins, or innocent and undue victims, swept away in the times of national calamity.

But among the possessors of Paradise, independently of the great historic characters of the race of Israel, there are ranks, differing in dignity according

to their merits, or the circumstances of their lives or deaths. The first order consists of those who suffered death for the honor of their law and nation, by the hands of Infidel governments; such as the Rabbi Akkiba and his disciples, who were put to death by the Roman authorities. The second order consists of those who have been drowned at sea. The third, of the famous Rabbi Ben Saccai and his disciples; the fourth, of those on whom the Shekinah, or glory, has descended; the fifth, of true penitents, who rank with the perfectly righteous; the sixth, of those who have never married, yet have lived a life of purity; the seventh, of those in humble life, who have constantly exercised themselves in the Bible, and the study of the Mishna, and have had an honest vocation. For each order there is a distinct abode. The highest order is that of the martyrs for the Law, the order of Akkiba and his disciples.

The decorations assigned to those fortunate classes are various; yet as even the Rabbinical imagination can invent nothing finer than gold and jewels, the diversity is not marked with sufficient distinctness to gratify European taste. All, however, is in the true Oriental profusion. Rabbi Jehoscha, still the great authority for supramundane affairs, relates, according to the *Jalkut Schimoni*, "That at the two ruby gates of Paradise, stand sixty times ten thousand spirits ministering, and that the countenance of each of them shines like the brightness of the firmament. On the arrival of one of the righteous from Earth, those spirits surround him, receive him with due honors, strip him of his grave-clothes, and robe



him in no less than eight garments of clouds of glory. They next put upon his head two crowns, one of pearls and diamonds, and the other of pure gold, and put eight myrrh branches into his hands. They then sing a chorus of praise round him, and bid him go and eat his bread in joy! They next lead him to springs of water, margined with eight hundred species of roses and myrrh, where to each of the righteous is assigned a separate canopy from the heat, or the splendor, or both. From the springs flow four rivers, of milk, wine, balsam, and honey. The canopies are crowned and lighted by pearls, each of which gives a light equal to that of the planet Venus. Under every canopy is laid a table of pearls and precious stones. And over the head of each hover a group of angels, who say to him, "Go now and eat honey with joy, because thou hast studied the Law, and exercised thyself therein; and go and drink the wine which is preserved from the six days of the Creation."

Among the righteous, the least handsome are like Joseph and Rabbi Jochanan (who was celebrated for his beauty). No night comes there; and there also the process of beauty and beatification is a matter of a few hours. In the time of the first watch, the righteous becomes an infant of Paradise, passes into the place where the spirits of infants are, and feels all the joyousness belonging to infancy. In the second watch, he starts into Paradisiac youth, passes into the dwelling of the youthful spirits, and enjoys their pursuits and pastimes. In the third watch, he enters into the state of Paradisiac manhood; his

perfection is complete, and he is thenceforth master of all the faculties and enjoyments of the region of happiness.

Paradise, too, retains its old supremacy over all gardens, from its abundance of trees, of which the Rabbins give it no less than eighty times ten thousand species in each of the quarters of this famous spot of celestial horticulture. Angels in abundance are also provided, either to cultivate or to admire them; for there are six hundred thousand in each quarter, floating about, or guarding the fruit. The tree of life stands there, with its branches covering the whole extent of Paradise, and with fruits suitable to all the various tastes of the righteous, for they have five hundred thousand several flavors. Seven clouds of glory sit above it, and at every wind which shakes it the fragrance passes from one end of the world to the other. The disciples of the sages are peculiarly favored, for they have their especial seats allotted under this tree. Their merit is to have profoundly studied and eloquently explained the Law.

A large portion of the Rabbinical writings is filled with those descriptions of lavish and fanciful beauty, but deformed with extravagancies, which offend even against the wildness of Eastern fiction. The light which supplies the place of sun to the righteous occupies a large space in the description. The treatise *Avodath Hakadesh*, after saying that the extent of the garden is immense, states that there stands in the centre a vast laver, filled with dew from the highest celestial region; and in its centre stands a light incapable of being eclipsed or obscured, it

being of the nature of that which was originally given for the use of Adam, and by which he was enabled to see at a glance from one end of the world to the other. But the ground in the neighborhood of this prodigious luminary conduces partially to this result, as it is an entire pavement of precious stones, each of which gives a light brilliant as that of a burning torch ; the whole forming an illumination of indescribable lustre.

It is obvious that, in their inventions, the Traditionists had no reluctance to borrow from the written letter. They seize just enough of the facts of Scripture to form a frame-work for the fiction, and over this they flourish their rambling and legendary conceptions. But, as they borrow largely, so they have been prodigally borrowed from. The Romish doctrines of supererogation, purgatory, and individual intercession, are not the work of Rome alone ; they are as old as the Rabbins ; and the only merit which the Romish adopters can claim is that of having turned a play of imagination into a principle of practice, made a rambling tenet a profitable dogma, and fabricated dreams and visions into a source of the deepest corruption that ever violated the simplicity of religion, revolted human reason, and stained the feeble purity of the human heart. In the *Nismath Chajim* we are told that the Rabbi Akkiba, their great doctor, one day, as he was going to be present at the burial of one of his disciples, was surprised at the sight of a being with the shape of a man, running with an enormous pile of wood on his shoulders — yet running with the

speed of a horse. The compassionate Rabbi stopped his celerity, and, perceiving that he was human, asked him why he was condemned to this singular labor, adding, "that he pitied him so much, that if he were a slave, and his master would be content to sell him, he himself would be the purchaser, in order to free him from this severity of toil ; or, if his poverty were the cause, that he would give him some opportunity of obtaining wealth." The man listened, but with wild impatience ; he struggled to break away, but, awed by the power of the great Akkiba, he could not move from the spot. At length he burst into a passionate cry, imploring that he might be suffered to go on, and fly over the world, bearing his melancholy burden. The Rabbi was astonished, but he now began to perceive that he was conversing with a being not of this world, and sternly demanded, "Art thou man or devil?" The unfortunate being in agony exclaimed, "I have past away from earth, and now my eternal portion is to carry fuel to the *Great Fire*." The startled Rabbi asked what act of his life could have plunged him into this dreadful calamity. The criminal answered that he had been a collector of the public taxes, and had abused his office by favoring the rich and oppressing the poor. The next question was whether he had ever heard, in his place of punishment, that there was any remedy for his guilt? The condemned now began to be impatient, through fear of increasing his punishment by delaying his task, and eagerly implored the Rabbi to let him go. At length, acknowledging that he had heard of one redemption,—namely, that if he had

a son, who could stand forth in the congregation, and there say the prayer of the Synagogue, beginning with "Blessed be the blessed Lord,"—he might be delivered from his sentence. On his being asked, whether he had a son, he answered that he did not know; that he had left his widow when she was about to have a child, but that he now could not know whether it was a son or a daughter; or, if a son, whether he was sufficiently instructed in the Law. To the further inquiry, where his family were to be found, he answered that his own name was Akkiba, his wife's Susmira, and his city Alduca. The man was now suffered to recommence his fearful race again. And the benevolent Rabbi began a pilgrimage from city to city until he found the due place. There he inquired for the dwelling of the husband. But he seems to have been unpopular among his countrymen, for the general answer to the Rabbi was, "May his bones be bruised in hell." The perplexed inquirer now attempted to ascertain the fate of the widow; but she appeared to be scarcely more fortunate than her husband—for the reply was, "Let her name be rooted out of the world." His sole resource now was the son; and of him the answer was not much more favorable. "He was not circumcised, his parents having had no regard to the Covenant."

But the Rabbi was not to be repelled; he discovered the boy at last, took him to his home, found him a preternatural dunce, into whom the Law could not by possibility make way; and was driven to a fast of forty days, which by divine aid at length accom-

plished the task of teaching him the alphabet. After this his education advanced to the extent of reading the prayer *Shema*. (Deut. vi. 4.) The Rabbi now brought forward his pupil, the prayer of spiritual liberation was recited, and in that hour the father was freed from his task. He soon after appeared to the Rabbi in a dream, saying, "May the rest of Paradise be thy portion, because thou hast rescued me from the punishment of hell." Then the Rabbi burst out into rejoicings, and repeated a holy hymn in honor of the achievement.

The only distinction between this pious performance and the exploits of later times is in the penance. If the Rabbi Akkiba had done his purgatorial work at Rome instead of at Jerusalem, he would have made others fast instead of mortifying himself, and he would have put a handsome sum into his purse for masses and indulgences, instead of incumbering himself with hospitality to the tardy subject of circumcision.

Some of those stories are publicly founded on the facts of the Jewish persecutions, though the historian who would take them, in their present state, for authority, would tread upon slippery ground. The treatise *Sanhedrin* gives the following account of the origin of the celebrated book *Zohar*:

The Rabbis Jehuda, Isaac, and Shimeon, were conversing, when Jehuda ben Gerim, a convert, came to them. On Jehuda's observing that the Romans excelled in buildings and public works, that they had erected markets, bridges, and baths, the Rabbi Shimeon contested their merit, by saying that they had done those things with selfish or corrupt objects.

The convert was clearly unworthy of hearing so much wisdom, for he carried the conversation to the imperial ear, and sentence soon followed, that the Rabbi who had spoken contemptuously of the reigning power should be slain, and the Rabbi who had kept silence should be banished, while the laudatory Rabbi should be promoted. On this announcement the Rabbi Shimeon, the chief culprit, fled with his son, and they hid themselves in the school, his wife bringing them bread and water every day. But the pursuit becoming close, and Shimeon observing to his son, with more truth than gallantry, that women were somewhat light-minded, and that the Romans might tease his wife into discovering the place of their retreat, he determined to put this casualty out of her power by hiding in a cave. There they must, however, have met with a fate as evil as the Roman sword, for they were on the point of famine; when a fruit-tree and a spring were created for their support. Here, whether for comfort, concealment, or saving their clothes, they undressed themselves, sat up to the neck in sand, and spent the day in study. At the time of prayer, however, they recollected the decorums of their law, dressed themselves, performed their service, and then laid aside their clothing once more. At the end of twelve years of this life of nakedness and learning, the prophet Elias stood at the entrance of the cave, and cried aloud, "Who will tell the son of Jochai that the emperor is dead, and his decree is come to an end?" Then went out the Rabbi Shimeon and his son. But their studies had rendered them unfit for the easy morality of the

world into which they were reëntering. They saw mankind as busy as ever with their worldly affairs, ploughing and trading, pursuing wealth, passion, and pleasure. They instantly exclaimed, "Behold a race of evil! behold a people who neglect eternal things!" Their words were fearful, but their effect was more fearful still, for, whatever they denounced, or whatever object fell beneath their indignant glance, was instantly consumed with flame. But this discipline would have thinned mankind too rapidly to be suffered long. A voice came forth from the clouds, "Are ye come out only to destroy the world? Return to your cave." The hermits were not disobedient to the high admonition. They returned to their solitude, and there abode a whole year. At the end of that period the Rabbi Shimeon lifted up his voice, and said, "Even in hell the wicked are punished but twelve months." This remonstrance was graciously listened to. The voice was heard again, commanding that they should come forth from the cave. They now came forth, restraining their wrath at the incorrigible worldliness of man, and shutting those fiery eyes whose glances consumed all they fell upon, like flashes of lightning. They suffered the world to take its own way, they took theirs; and thenceforth lived in popularity, ate their bread in peace, and escaped the turbulent life and thankless death of those who trouble themselves with the morals of their neighbors. But their sojourn in the cave was not unproductive; for their wise heads and industrious fingers produced the famous treatise, *Zohar*.



With those conceptions of the power of man and angels, it may be presumed that the Rabbins have not neglected the space offered to the imagination in the kingdom of darkness. There they arrange, distribute, and define all kinds of faculties, pursuits, and punishments, in the most exuberant and sometimes in the most striking style. Their legends exhibit all the characteristics of the Oriental school, and are alternately feeble and forcible, absurd and interesting, trivial and sublime. One portion of the spirits of evil they conceive to possess a kind of middle state between the worlds of nature and spirit. They are declared to resemble angels in three things—the power of flight, foresight, and passing from one part of the earth to the other with instant and angelic speed. To the humbler race of man they are linked also by three things—by feeling the necessity of food, by being increased according to human generation, and by being liable to death. Those evil spirits know no Salic law, for they have no less than four queens, named the *Lilis*, the *Naama*, the *Igerith*, and the *Machalath*; each of these formidable sovereigns waving the sceptre over bands of unclean spirits utterly beyond calculation. They are severally paramount, each presiding over a fourth of the year, but in this period reigning over nature only from the hour of sunset till midnight. Once in the year they assemble with their dark legions on the heights of Nishpa, in the centre of the mountains of the Equator. But over them all Solomon had power. Those four are, however, the wives of one, the Prince *Sammael* who reigns over *Esau*; to whom the Rabbins have

a peculiar aversion, which they display on all occasions. The four queens are among the inconveniences which beset the daily life of the Jew. The Christian peasantry of Europe have their unlucky day, Friday ; and the Moslems are not without their day of casualty. But the Jew must be a dexterous steersman, who can make his way through any of the seven days of the week without running foul of misfortune regularly laid down in the calendar. The Rabbinical caution especially lies against venturing out alone in the nights of Thursdays or the Sabbaths, for on those nights the Igerith is especially abroad, with an army of no less than one hundred and eighty thousand evil spirits, ready to pluck the truest of believers from the face of the earth at the instant of his putting his foot beyond the threshold.

But the *Lilith*, or *Lilis*, is the lady of romance. When Adam was first formed, Lilis was his wife. She was made of earth, but her earthly compound was ill suited to the perfection of the first father of mankind. She contested his right of being master of his own house, and then began that quarrel which has been so often renewed since the beginning of the world. Lilis would not recede ; Adam would not concede ; and the result was, as in later times, a demand for a separate maintenance. Lilis pronounced the *Shem Hamphorash* ; wings started from her shoulders at the words, and she darted upward from the presence of her astonished lord, to range the kingdoms of the air. Adam appealed to authority ; and three angels, *Sensi*, *Sansenoi*, and *Samman-gelof*, were sent in full wing after her. A decree was

issued, that, if she came back voluntarily, all should be forgiven; but, if she refused to come, one hundred of her children should die every day! But Lilis had already felt the charms of freedom, and she resolved to enjoy them to her utmost. The three angels supplicated in vain. She waved her plumage across the earth; they pursued. She fled across the farthest waters of the ocean. There, at length, she was overtaken. She still refused. The angels threatened to strip her of her wings, to plunge her in the waters which rolled beneath them, and bind her in chains at the bottom of the sea forever. Still Lilis was inflexible, and she even awed them with the declaration that she had been created with the especial power to destroy children, the males from the day of their birth to the eighth day (the day of circumcision), but the females until the tenth day. This menace rendered it only the more indispensable that this formidable truant should be brought back to her allegiance. They now proceeded to exert their powerful means; when Lilis offered a compromise, that whenever she saw any of the names or pictures of the angels on a *Kamea* (a slip of parchment hung round a child's neck), she would spare the child. The subsequent offspring of Lilis were evil spirits, of whom a hundred die daily, but unfortunately the produce is more rapid than the extinction. But the Doctors of the Law acknowledge the value of the agreement, and therefore write the names of the angels upon all children's necks, that Lilis may be equally true to the compact, and spare the rising generation of Israel.

Solomon, the perpetual theme of Oriental story, of course flourishes in the annals of those inexhaustible dealers in prodigies. One of the Chaldee paraphrases tells us of a feast which Solomon, the son of David, the wise and holy, gave in the days of his glory, and to which he invited all the kings of the earth, from east to west. He regaled his guests with more than royal magnificence; and in the course of the banquet, when his heart was high with wine, showed them the wonders of his power. He first ordered the troops of minstrels trained by his father to enter and exhibit their skill on the harp, cymbal, trumpet, and other instruments. Nothing could be more exquisite. All were astonished and delighted. But he had a more striking display in reserve. At the waving of his sceptre, and the uttering of a command to all the creatures of the earth to attend, the halls of the immense palace were instantly crowded with a concourse of all the kinds of animals, from the lion to the serpent, and from the eagle to the smallest of the birds. The terror of his kingly guests was at first excessive, but it was changed to wonder by seeing the whole crowd of animals acknowledging the power of the man of wisdom; uttering voices to him, all which he understood and answered, and displaying all their qualities and beauties in homage to the mighty monarch. But a still more astounding spectacle was to follow. The king, ordering a small cup of a single chrysolite to be brought to him, poured into it a liquid of a dazzling brightness, till the whole cup glowed like a star; and a flame ascending from it shot forth a thousand

distinct shafts of fire to all parts of the horizon. In a short time sounds of the most fearful kind were heard in earth and air, and the army of the demons, night-spectres, and evil spirits, submissive to his will, poured into the palace. The numbers on this public occasion may be imagined from their habits of congregating on the most private ones. The Rabbins hold that the whole system of nature is so crowded with them, that a true believer has scarcely room to turn on his heel without treading on the hoofs of some of them. The Rabbi Benjamin says that, if a man is not cautious how he opens his eye, there are some who will be sure to get between the lids. Others assert that they stand round us as thick as the fences of a garden. The treatise *Raf Ham* gives the actual number that molest a Rabbi, — an occupation in which they naturally take a peculiar pleasure. This number amounts to a thousand on his left side, and, by some curious preference of mischief, ten thousand on his right. The treatise *Rabba* proceeds to solve some of the more obvious earthly inconveniences which beset the Israelite by this perverse presence. Thus the thronging and pressing in the synagogue, which produces so much confusion and surprise, when every one seems to perceive that there is room enough for all, is really occasioned by those invisible intruders, who are so fond of hearing the discourses of the Jewish priests that they fill the synagogue to suffocation. The whole fatigue felt in the service also proceeds from their pressure. Even the tearing and wearing of the clothes of the Israelites — a matter which they seem to feel as a peculiar grievance —

proceeds from the restless movement and remorseless rubbing of their viewless associates.

But on this feast day of their mighty master none dared to make experiments on his sufferance. All displayed themselves in their best points of view ; and nothing could be more strange, more wonderful, or more dazzling, than the whole measureless muster of the hosts of the nether world. There followed, in long march, shapes of fire ; some flashing beams, keen as lightning ; some shedding light, soft as the rainbow ; some of colossal stature ; some of the smallest dwarfishness ; some in the naked and powerful proportions of the antediluvian giant ; some of the most delicate and subtle loveliness of form, clothed in silk and gold ; some wearing armor, royal robes, coronets studded with stars small as the eye of a mole, yet sparkling with intolerable brilliancy ; some on the wing ; some in floating chariots of metals unknown on earth, yet exceeding the gossamer in lightness, and gold in splendor ; some riding coursers of the most inconceivable strength and stupendous magnitude, tall as the towers of a city, and beside which the elephant would have looked like a fawn ; some steering barges, entirely formed of rich jewels, through the air, and sweeping round the pillars and sculptures of the palace with infinite velocity ; some on foot, and treading on tissues of silver and scarlet, which continually spread wherever they trode, and threw up living roses at each step ; some with countenances marked with the contortions of pain and terror, but some of an exquisite and intense beauty, which at once fixed and overwhelmed the eye. All

moved to the sound of an infinite number of instruments, warlike, pastoral, and choral, according to their states and powers, and all formed the most singular and wondrous sight imaginable. Yet, though all the guests confessed that they had never seen the equal of this display, they yet acknowledged that it inspired them with indescribable fear. They felt that they were in an evil presence; and not even the charm of those allurements and temptations which still remain to fallen spirits,—not even their wisdom, beauty, and knowledge of the secrets of nature, their brilliant intellect, and universal skill,—could prevent the kings from praying Solomon that he would command his terrible vassals, the tribes of the world of darkness, to depart from the palace. The king, in compassion to their human weakness, complied, and taking up the cup of chrysolite, poured into it a liquor of the color of ebony. The cup suddenly grew black as night, and a thousand shafts of darkness shot out from it to all parts of the horizon. They pierced through the ranks of the evil spirits like a flight of arrows, and instantly the whole mighty multitude broke up, and scattered in all directions through the air. Their flight was long seen like a fall of fiery meteors; and their yells, as they flew, were heard as far as Babylon.

Wolf, the missionary, who is now rambling through Asia, and rejoicing in the perilous encounter of Rajahs, tigers, angry Israelites, and dagger-bearing Moslems, will probably soon give a new public interest to one of the most popular conceptions that ever fell into oblivion,—the existence of the lost tribes

of Israel. The present object of this indefatigable rambler is declaredly to bring to light the retreats of the famous revolvers of Jeroboam. What resources for the discovery he may find in his own possession, we must leave to time. But, if he should condescend to take his wisdom from the pages of the Rabbins, he will find them ready and copious in supplying him with the most unhesitating information on every point of possible curiosity. The Rabbi Benjamin, in his work, *Massaoth Shel Rabbi Benjamin*, long since informed the wondering world that "from the city *Raabar*, formerly called *Pombeditha*, on the banks of the Euphrates, it is exactly twenty-one days' journey through the desert of *Saba*, in the direction of *Sincar*, to the frontier of the country called that of the *Rechabites*. Their capital is the city of *Tema*, where the Prince *Chanan*, who is also a Rabbi, governs the nation. The city is of large dimensions, and the territory is worthy of the capital. It extends sixteen days' journey between the northern mountains. The people are numerous and warlike, yet they are subject to the *Gojim*, a Gentile power, which forays to a great distance, in company with some hordes of wild Arabs, who live on their northern boundary. Those Rechabite Jews plough, and keep cattle, give the tenth of their possessions to the scribes and sages, who live in the schools, and to the poorer Jews, and especially to those who mourn over Sion, and neither eat flesh nor drink wine, but who perpetually wear black garments, in sign of the sorrows of Jerusalem. The number of the people living in *Tema* and *Tilima* is about one hundred thousand.



And thither come, once in the year, Printe *Solomon*, and his brother *Chanan*, of the line of David, with shattered clothing, to fast forty days, and pray for the miseries of those Jews who are in exile.

“In the country of the prince, who thus comes periodically to fast with the Rechabites, the people seem to be tolerably prosperous. He has fifty cities, two hundred villages, and a hundred fortresses. His capital is *Thenai*, remarkably strong, and fifteen miles square, containing fields, gardens, and orchards. *Tilima* is also a very strong city, seated in the mountains. From *Tilima* it is three days’ journey to *Kibar*, where the people declare themselves of the tribes *Reuben*, *Gad*, and the half-tribe of *Manasseh*, which Shalmanezzer, the Assyrian, carried into captivity. They are a singularly belligerent race; they have large and strong cities. They wage constant hostilities with their neighbors, and are almost secure of impunity, by having in their frontier a desert of eighteen days’ journey, utterly uninhabitable by man. The city of *Kibar* also is large, with about fifty thousand Jews among the inhabitants. They carry on frequent wars with the people of *Sincar* and the north. The other Israelites spread to the east; and the country of *Aliman* touches even the borders of India.” We are in some fear that these names will not be found in the modern maps; but the detail is confident, and if the missionary should blunder in the regions between the Euxine and the Caspian, he will have the satisfaction of blundering upon high Rabbinical authority.

But it was to be presumed that a tradition, which

had so long excited popular curiosity, would at some time or other be adapted for the purposes of ingenious imposture. How few instances are there of the mysterious death of a prince, or the fall of a dynasty, which have not exhibited a ready succession of dexterous pretenders, from the days of Sebastian of Portugal down to the late Dauphin, the unfortunate son of the unfortunate Louis XVI. ! The treatise *Shibboleth* gives a sketch of one of these bold adventurers. In the year of the world the 1466th after the destruction of the second temple (A. D. 1534), there appeared in Europe a man from a distant country, who called himself *Rabbi David, a Reubenite*. He went to Rome, where he had an interview with Clement VII., and was favorably received. On being questioned by the pontiff as to himself, he said that he was the Commander-in-Chief of the army of the King of Israel. He was of a Moorish complexion, short in stature, and about forty-five years of age. From Rome he went to Portugal, where he was received by the king; and, understanding only Hebrew and Arabic, spoke generally by an interpreter. He declared that he was sent as ambassador from the Israelite Kings of *Chalach, Chabar*, and the nations on the river *Gozan*, to demand assistance, and peculiarly cannon, from the European princes, that they, the Israelites, might be enabled to make head against their infidel enemies. The Rabbi remained for a considerable time in Portugal, and converted to Judaism one of the king's private secretaries, who, though a Christian, was of Jewish parents. On this conversion, the Rabbi David left the country, and took with him his con-

vert, who now bore the name of *Solomon Malco*. The convert was a man of ability and eloquence; and though he had previously no knowledge of the law, and was of the uncircumcised, yet, when he came among his new brethren, he preached powerfully, especially in Italy, where his expounding both the written and the oral law astonished the most celebrated teachers, and perplexed the people, who wondered where he could have found his singular wisdom. His own account of it was satisfactory; he had been endowed with it by an angel. Solomon Malco now wrote several treatises which increased his fame; he next declared himself to be one of the messengers of the Messiah. He was remarkably handsome, and his manners were high-bred and courteous. Rabbi David, too, had his share of public wonder, for he fasted for six days and nights, without suffering anything to enter his lips, — a fact proved by accurate witnesses. But the career of the more aspiring or more active missionary was to have an unhappy close. Rabbi Solomon ventured himself within the presence of Charles V. at Mantua. To what the actual conference amounted has escaped history, but the result was an order that he should be delivered over to the secular arm. The unfortunate zealot was brought to the stake, *gagged*, through fear, as the Jews say, of his using some strong spell, or form of words, by which he might escape his tormentors. His life was offered to him, but he firmly rejected the offer, and died without shrinking. Rabbi David's career was extinguished at the same time, but by a

less cruel catastrophe. He was sent a prisoner into Spain, where he died.

Subsequent narratives state that the two missionaries had attempted to convert the King of Portugal, the *Pope*, and the *Emperor* — an attempt which certainly wanted nothing of the boldness of proselytism ; and that the Rabbi's refusal to be converted in turn was the immediate cause of the sentence. Solomon was burned in Mantua, A. D. 1540.

But to those who desire a more detailed account of the expatriated and long-hidden nations, let the learned Rabbi *Eldad* the *Danite* supply intelligence. "There," says this faithful topographer, "is the tribe of Moses, our instructor, the just, and the servant of heaven. Those Jews are surrounded with the river *Sabbatajon*, the compass of which is as much as one can walk in three months. They live in stately houses, and have magnificent buildings and towers erected by themselves. There is no unclean thing among them ; no scorpion, no serpent, no wild beast. Their flocks and herds bring forth twice a year. They have gardens, stocked with all kinds of fruits ; but they neither sow nor reap. They are a people of faith, and well instructed in the *Mishna*, *Gemara*, and *Aggada*. Their Talmud is written in the Hebrew tongue. They say, our forefathers have taught us out of the mouth of Joshua, out of the mouth of Moses, and out of the mouth of God. They know nothing of the Talmudic doctrines which were in being in the time of the second temple. They lengthen their days to a hundred and twenty years. Neither sons nor daughters die in the lifetime of their parents ;

they advance to the third and fourth generation. A child drives their cattle many days' journey, because they have neither wild beasts, murderers, nor evil spirits to fear. Their Levites labor in the law and in the commandments. They see no man, and are seen of none, except the four tribes which dwell on the further side of the river of Ethiopia, *Dan*, *Naphthali*, *Gad*, and *Asser*. The sand of the river Sabbatajon is holy. In an hour-glass it runs six days of the week; but on the seventh it is immovable. The people are twice as numerous as when they left Judea."

But those narratives are endless. Though probably containing some fragments of truth, the fact is so encumbered with the fiction that they become a mere matter of romance. But the graver consideration remains: Are such things the wisdom of the chosen people? Are the reveries of the Talmuds the study by which the learned of the Jews at this hour are to be advanced in sacred knowledge? Are those giddy and wandering inventions to be the substitute for those "Oracles," which the greatest writer of their nation, even Saul of Tarsus, pronounced to be the preëminent privilege of the sons of Israel? Unhappily, the question cannot be answered in the negative. The Talmuds are at this hour the fount from which the immense multitude of Judaism draw all their knowledge of religion. Some learned men among them may study the learning of the Scriptures. Some holy men among them—for there are those even in the community of Israel, who have not been utterly forsaken by the light of truth

— the seven thousand who have not yet bowed the knee to Baal, may love the wisdom of inspiration. But to the majority the Talmuds are the grand obstruction to light and knowledge, the fatal source of that stubborn resistance to sacred truth, and to the severest lessons of national suffering, which, even in all the advances of later times, keeps the Jew in irremediable darkness and inexorable chains.



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